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Go bright!



We're loving the sunny days here at *Homemaker*. Even when we've had just a glimmer of light and a mere promise of heat we've grabbed the chance get outside and enjoy our gardens, balconies and local parks. Because this is the time to enjoy alfresco actitivies we've got some clever ideas for garden updates on page 17 and we show you how to add some fresh flora and fauna to even the tiniest of open air spaces on page 93.

Don't you just love your free gift this issue? The great selection of fabric means you can whip up a whole host of fabulous homesewn makes – turn to page 42 to find out what we did with our materials. And, if that's whetted your appetite to get handy with the sewing machine then check out our gorgeous stitchy makes. We show you how to create a pretty studded cushion on page 40, a beautiful quilt on page 30, an amazing patchwork pouffe on page 46 and a stylish oven glove and pan holder on page 70.

Upcyclers won't be disappointed with this issue either as we feature some really cool ideas on how to revamp tired old pieces into contemporary talking points. We love Carol Smillie's inspirational bathroom transformation – take a look on page 28, and we adore the way Amanda Walker has used fabric to update a scruffy set of shelves on page 54 – these would look great in a kid's bedroom.

We also have lots of other great ideas and products to inspire you to become the best home crafter you can be. Take a look at our introduction to knitting on page 102 and if you fancy giving cross stitch a try then check out the easy kit make on page 109.

We hope you love this issue as much as we do and we're super keen to see your creations, so share your creative triumphs with us via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – you never know, we may showcase your efforts in the magazine.

Happy homemaking,

Ella

ELLA JOHNSTON, EDITOR
ella.johnston@aceville.co.uk





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OMBRE TEA LIGHT HOLDER £4.50, **MARKSANDSPENCER.COM**
BAMBOO BOWL £14, **OLIVERBONAS.COM**
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ISSUE 33
JULY 2015

HOW WE MADE

Homemaker



We adore Amanda Walker's studded cushion



Check out these darling crochet bees!



This patch pouffe is so darn comfy

MEET THE TEAM

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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Lisa Faulkner shares some delicious treats with us on page 66



Irene Strange delights us on page 35 with her beautiful bees



Transform your bathroom with Carol Smillie's cabinet revamp on page 28



We're so delighted to showcase Corinne Bradd's quilting talents on page 30



Learn how to make a studded cushion on page 40 with Amanda Walker's step-by-step



Lynne Rowe crochets us some beautiful charms on page 88 to hang from doors, drawers and baskets

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- *Die-cutting butterflies for cool displays*
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Pots of colour

Grab a paintbrush and customise your wares

MIX UP THE USUAL TERRACOTTA SHADES WITH AQUA HUES. Don't get us wrong, we're definitely fans of the earthy clay tones of traditional plant pots, but this summer we can't wait to add a fresh new painted element. Make the colours of your blooms really pop by painting varying stripes around your vessels in bright, crisp shades. Why not give your garden bench a makeover while you're there too? **farrow-ball.com**

This month in... Homemaker hub

JOIN OUR CLUB...

Full of homemaking pearls of wisdom? Have crafty questions that need answering or great tips for projects? Then join our hub and become a part of Homemaker magazine by sending your comments, tips and a photo to **francesca.cowling@aceville.co.uk**



ALEX IVESON, London, talks baking with kids on page 69



MEGAN HEMMING, London, inspires us to start knitting on page 102



GEM WITCHALLS, Wrexham, makes the most of small gardens on page 17

STAR

JOT DOWN ALL YOUR CREATIVE IDEAS IN THESE BEAUTIFUL FOREST FEAST NOTEBOOKS (ERIN GLEESON, ABRAMS NOTERIE, £9.99)



WIN

ABRAMSNOTERIE





Hi Homemaker!

Not long ago I discovered the joys of Annie Sloan paint and since being introduced to it, everything has been painted – both old and new. I have never been to so many charity shops, tips and car boot sales!

Most recently, we bought a gentleman's wardrobe from a charity shop for £30 (what a bargain!) but it needed a bit of love and care. We sanded it down, added a beading to the doors, new handles and a cornice to the top before giving it a new lick of paint.

What we love most about this wardrobe is the interior with labels on each shelf to help you decide where to store your clothing. Hopefully we've preserved a little bit of history!

Thank you for all the new and exciting ideas Homemaker!

Emma Clift, via email

EVENT REVIEW...

Been to a great crafty class, had an inspiring read or used a creative kit recently? Send your review to **francesca.cowling@aceville.co.uk** to see it in print AND win a £20 voucher for Retreat Home!

retreat

Gifts from the heart made with love

Win £20 voucher!

Homemaker reader Emma Simmonds and her husband attended an icing class at the Biscuiteers Icing Cafe, here's what she thought:





"The class we booked was 'London' themed, perfect for a big day out in the capital. We'd be recreating lots of London icons in sugary goodness, including Big Ben, Tower Bridge, a trusty Tube sign, and a traditional black taxi.

Upon arriving, we were instantly in awe of all the beautiful things that the Biscuiteers make and were eager to get started. The session started with a quick icing lesson, learning some basics, but it wasn't long before we began decorating some actual biscuits. We worked with royal icing, using a mixture of piping bags to create outlines and then filling in with 'flooding' icing. They were then popped into an oven to dry out before we added detail. This was a bit more fiddly but the tutor was really helpful with lots of tips.

The session was really enjoyable, with a laid back atmosphere. I'm now on the look out for more crafty things that we can do as a couple."

HOMEMAKER NEWSFEED

Homemaker Magazine – 28th May

Who knew paper could be so adorable?



20 amazing origami animals - Papercrafter

Pinterest BOARD

A peek at a board we're currently coveting:

pinterest.com/esmeim/craft-garden-summer/









GARDEN CRAFTING

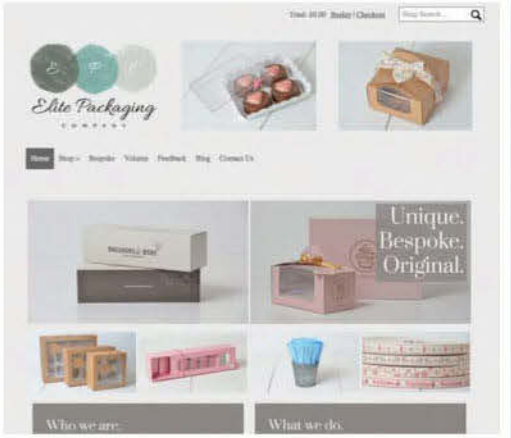
This summer take your crafts alfresco and turn your garden into an inspiring, creative haven with the help of this Pinterest board. Delight the kids with tiny handmade signposts for fairies, spruce up your terracotta pots with paint and fashion quirky hanging planters to really make the most of your space.

VOICE FROM THE BLOGOSPHERE



Sewsensational
sewsensational.wordpress.com

If you're looking for a charming documentation of a budding stitcher and seamstress, then Sewsensational is the blog for you. Creative Louise lets us in to take a peek at her crafting journey as she, in her own words, covers her home, life, family and friends in soft furnishings. Full of helpful tips with a friendly tone, Louise covers everything from where to start if you're new to sewing, how she finds different patterns and book reviews, as well as various project tutorials, including knitted bunting and a patchwork clock.



HOMEMAKER'S WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

ELITEPACKAGING COMPANY.CO.UK

Whether you've just slaved over a batch of cupcakes in the kitchen or have spent hours crafting the perfect gift, the last thing you'll want to do is hide it away in an ugly brown box. That's why we love Elite Packaging, who design and supply bespoke, versatile and unique packaging in pretty colours and a range of shapes and sizes, perfect for showcasing your crafty works of art.



Take a look at our lovely new website for free patterns, papers, downloads and recipes. Plus bonus projects! **homemaker magazine.co.uk**

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Our reader maker...

Wardrobe wonders

We chat to **Abi Simmons** about her wonderful children's hangers



Check out Abi's gorgeous products at **folksy.com/shops/redhandgang**





Abi Simmons' charming business, Red Hand Gang, is centred around children and the simple pleasures of life. The name is a nod to the children's television programme and her idyllic country childhood with her siblings. Abi made her first products about two and a half years ago for her two daughters. "My girls were very prolific scribblers so I made them personalised sketch books in an attempt to keep their artistic urges away from my walls!" As friends, then friends of friends, started requesting books of their own, Abi opened her first online shop with Etsy, then Folksy, which she loves being a part of. "I love that they are really championing British craft and all the makers busily creating gorgeous goodies in their homes."

FAMILY FAVOURITES

With a mother who loves to knit and father skilled in painting and wood engraving, it's no real surprise that Abi has a creative streak. After studying Art and Photography, she got her first job selling handmade products on a stall at Portobello Market, but the idea of earning money doing what she loved didn't occur to her until she became a mother herself. "I wanted that flexibility to do what I want. I feel very privileged to be able to be with my girls and run a small enterprise." But Abi says starting the business was a steep learning curve. "Finances were a problem in the beginning and I had to learn where to make investments. The second biggest stumbling block is time, it turns out there aren't enough hours in the day, which means I work at night, a lot!"

And no wonder, because Abi's hangers may look cute but they are incredibly labour-intensive. "There are so many stages to get it from a bit of plywood to the final painted product. They are laser cut locally and then there is a lot of sanding! They are all hand-painted and printed by me." A fan of clean lines and the Scandi look, Abi says she is also inspired by kid's picture books, Japanese toy designers and of course, Instagram and Pinterest. "Social media for me has been the biggest asset to the growth of my business. I use Instagram mainly and I love to give customers an insight into the workings of Red Hand Gang. I certainly wouldn't be where I am today without the support I get from Red Hand Gang Instagram followers!"

A GROWING CONCERN

The handmade market is certainly an exciting one to be a part of, and Abi says she stumbled across a niche with the children's hangers when she realised no one else had anything quite like them. "I personalise the hangers with whichever hair colour the customer wants and in the past I have painted huge handlebar moustaches, names and plenty of superheroes! I have shelves lined with hangers in various stages of painting, a cupboard full of unpainted products and orders hanging on a peg above my desk." The next step for Red Hand Gang? "At the moment we're preparing new products for autumn and Christmas but in the future I'd like to employ some more help so that I can exhibit at trade shows. Oh and sleep, I really hope there will be more sleep!"

"Starting a business is a very personal journey"







HEADLINES

NEWS # EVENTS # BOOKS # TRENDS # HOT PRODUCTS



SWEET DREAMS

A nice biscuit dunked in a cuppa and getting into bed after a long day are two of our favourite things to enjoy, so it's no wonder that Brit brand Loaf's latest bed, (adorably named Shortbread) instantly caught our eye. With clean curved lines and solid oak weathered legs, this upholstered beauty is a slice of perfection. Pick from a palette of more than 120 fabrics to have it made up in, we love this pretty teal shade, which will set off your light and bright summer décor perfectly. **loaf.com**

THIS MONTH'S FIND...

Cutting is going wireless! Cricut, has recently introduced the Explore Air, a brand new wireless design and cut system that uses Bluetooth technology. Used alongside the Cricut Design Space app, you can design on the go whenever inspiration strikes, then cut your project wirelessly on materials including paper, fabric and leather when you get home. For more info, visit **uk.cricut.comuk.cricut.com**

SPOTLIGHT ON THORNBACK AND PEEL

Inspired by the line, 'the cows are in the meadows eating buttercups', from the classic English nursery rhyme, Ring a Ring O' Roses, this kitchenware collection by Thornback and Peel is the definition of charming. Featuring the brand new Cow & Buttercup print are a variety of textiles including aprons, oven gloves, napkins and tea towels, creating a sunny scene perfect for the summer season. Made from 100% cotton, these pieces add a touch of quirkiness and luxury to any home. From £9.95, **thornbackandpeel.co.uk**



CURRENTLY COVETING...

Treat someone with a sweet tooth to a cute candy-style crochet hook. **etsy.com/uk/shop/Hooklicious**





This vintage teacup set has been painted and assembled to make a quirky bird feeder. **en.dawanda.com**

We've all been there when trying to decide on a new paint colour for our home – struggling to hold numerous fiddly swatches up to the walls, put our elbows in wet tester patches and then having a nightmare trying to cover them up with the final selected shade. Colour and Paint have come up with a dream solution, known as the iPatch. The flexible, A4 sample sheets have a coat of real paint on one side and low-tack adhesive backing on the other, meaning they can be attached and re-attached to any interior wall without leaving a residue. The layer of real pigment means they offer a perfect colour match, and you keep your elbows clean! **colourandpaint.com**

Dining alfresco is one of the best things about summer, and this year it's better than ever thanks to all the lovely ranges of outdoor dinnerware. We've seen a number of familiar trends reappear this season, from nautical to Moroccan, but Homesense has created an eclectic new range combining a number of styles, which makes a change from the classics. Thrown together are a mixture of exotic pouffes, floral patterns and monochromatic fruit, set off by fun plates and utensils that are half and half of colours and styles. Fron £2.99, **homesense.com**

site to see

Replenish your haberdashery stash at **sewcraftyonline.co.uk**

SAVE THE DATE...

AUG 28-31 Chilterns Craft and Design Show takes place this summer in Stonor Park, Henley-on-Thames, and is guaranteed to be a great day out for all the family. Meet up to 250 artisan craftspeople from all over the UK, who will bring you the best in unusual and inspiring makes and ideas.



Head to **homemaker magazine.co.uk** for the chance to win tickets to this event!

AUG 15-16 The Knebworth Country Show, Knebworth House, Knebworth

Weald of Kent Craft and Design Show, Penhurst Place, Tonbridge **SEP 11-13**

SEP 26 Thame Food Festival, Thame, Oxfordshire

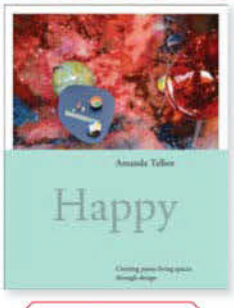
SPOTTED



Meaning 'an exalted state of happiness', homewares company Feliz aims to evoke this feeling through its handmade range of quirky and fun bed linen and decorative cushions. Organically and ethically produced and printed by hand in Melbourne, the range is illustrated with pops of colour and clean simple designs that you can't help but fall in love with. From pretty watercolour stripes and fluro polka dots to a pillowcase that can say either 'siesta' or 'fiesta' depending on your mood, there is something to inject a sense of playfulness into every home. **felizhome.com.au**

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at home with homemaker

Alfresco UPDATES

Give your garden a treat with our summer-themed makes



When it comes to refreshing your spaces it's easy to forget your outdoor zones. Come summer, when those blooms in your window boxes, garden or local park are standing proud in all their colourful glory, it's nice to spruce up the outside. So whether you want to treat your garden to some revamped furniture or simply lift your picnics with some updated dinnerware, check out our collection of seasonal projects and enjoy your time in the sun.



OUR MAKERS...

CORINNE BRADD, CAROLYN LETTEN, AMANDA WALKER



PATCHWORK TYRE SEAT

YOU'LL NEED:
Patterned fabric, 25 15cm squares from artgalleryfabrics.com
Rust-Oleum universal all surface paint
Rust-Oleum primer
Two old car tyres
Six bolts, 0.8cm x 7cm
Six nuts, 0.8cm
Drill and 0.8cm metal bit
60cm square of thick plywood
Jigsaw and blade
60cm square quilt wadding
60cm square foam pad
Strong adhesive
Staple gun

1 Clean tyres thoroughly. Once completely dry, use a metal drill bit to make three holes in the flat side of one tyre, 5cm from the edge and at equal distances around the circumference. Place this tyre, hole side down, centrally on top of the second tyre and mark through the holes with a chalk pencil.

2 Remove the top tyre and drill holes in the second tyre at the chalk marks. Place the first tyre back on top and join the two with nuts and bolts. Place the tyre stack onto newspaper outside and spray with two coats of light coloured primer. Leave to dry.

3 Find the centre of the plywood and pin a length of string here. Make a mark along the string at 29cm and use this to make pencil marks in a circle around the centre. Cut along the marks with a jigsaw and sand away any rough edges to make a 58cm wide disc of plywood.

4 Drill three holes in the plywood, 2cm from the edge and at equal distances around the circumference. Place the disc centrally on top of the primed tyres and mark through the holes with chalk. Remove the disc and drill holes at the marks in the top of the stack. Put a little strong adhesive in the holes in the plywood and thread bolts through, leaving the glue to dry and hold the bolts in place.

5 Place the stack onto newspaper and coat with All Surface paint, working it into the tread. Allow the first coat to dry before re-coating to give an even colour. Leave to dry then spray with a clear sealant if the stool is to be used in a high traffic area.

6 Take 25 15cm square pieces of patterned fabric and sew together in a five by five grid with a 5mm seam allowance. Press and layer the panel onto quilt wadding. Pin in place and top stitch the layers together along the seam lines to make a quilted panel.

7 Cut the foam pad into a circle, using the plywood as a guide. Place the quilted panel face down on a flat surface. Put the foam circle in the centre and the plywood disc on top of this with the bolts pointing up. Pull the fabric up around the plywood and staple to secure. Work from side to side to keep the fabric panel in the centre.

8 Trim away excess fabric from the panel and gather around the curve to prevent huge folds in one area. Turn the padded seat right way up and thread the protruding bolts through the holes in the top of the tyre stack, secure with the remaining nuts.

The great outdoors

FURNITURE CARE

CARRY OUT ANY MAINTENANCE AND STORING OF FURNITURE AT THE END OF SUMMER SEASON IN DRY WEATHER. CLEAN PLASTIC WITH SOAP AND WATER AND STORE INSIDE AS IT CAN BECOME BRITTLE IF LEFT OUT OVER WINTER OR EXPOSED TO STRONG SUNSHINE.

LET'S PLAY

MAKE THE OUTDOORS A PLAYGROUND AND UNLEASH YOUR INNER CHILD. GARDEN GAMES ARE A GREAT WAY TO GET PEOPLE LAUGHING AND RELAXED. CHECK OUT OUR TOP THREE PLAY KITS ON PAGE 23 THAT SHOULD BE A HIT WITH GROWN-UPS AND KIDS ALIKE.

PICNIC FOR CHARITY

ENJOY AN ALFRESCO DINNER AND RAISE MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE AT THE SAME TIME. HOST A PERFECT PICNIC FOR LEUKAEMIA CARE AND HELP THE CHARITY SUPPORT PEOPLE AFFECTED BY BLOOD CANCER. VISIT **LEUKAEMIACARE.ORG.UK/PERFECTPICNIC** FOR MORE DETAILS.



Reader tip...

Gem says: Our back garden in Falmouth was always wet, so we painted the fence white and blue, strung up nautical lights on thick ropes and made a border of palms and potted plants. It felt like a real seaside retreat!



THESE BOTTLE COVERS ARE SO EASY TO ADAPT TO ANY SIZE OF BOTTLE BY STARTING WITH A BIGGER OR SMALLER FABRIC.

IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT A GARDEN, HANG A GARLAND FROM A BALCONY OR WINDOW INSTEAD!



CONDIMENT COVERS

YOU'LL NEED:
Fat quarter floral fabrics from artgalleryfabrics.com
Iron-on-interfacing
Purple chevron ribbon
Note: 0.5cm seam allowance

OIL COVER

1 Back a 10cm x 24cm panel of cream print fabric with interfacing.

2 Trim a purple flower from the floral fabric and cut it in half horizontally. Interface and pin in the middle of the cream fabric so that its raw edge is at the bottom. Stitch around the flower in purple thread to secure.

3 Cut two 2.5cm x 24cm strips of the purple printed fabric. Pin each one right sides together across the top and bottom of the cream stitch across. Press the seam open on the reverse.

4 Pin a 10cm x 24cm piece of cream fabric to the front panel right sides together. Cut two 25cm lengths of narrow purple chevron ribbon and insert one inside each end of the cover half way down so 0.5cm sticks out and the rest is tucked inside. Stitch around the cover but leave a gap at the bottom for turning. Clip excess fabric from the corners, turn right side out, iron flat and hand stitch the gap to close.

5 Write 'oil' by hand or machine stitching using purple thread.

VINEGAR COVER

1 Back a 18cm x 27cm section of cream fabric with interfacing.

2 Cut out a whole purple flower and two flower centres cut into circles and interface. Pin the whole flower in the middle of the cream and the circular flowers at the top left and bottom right. Stitch in place using purple thread. Iron on the reverse.

3 Join a 2.5cm x 27cm panel of dark purple fabric across the top and bottom of the cream fabric. Iron seam open.

4 Trim cream fabric to the same size as the front and repeat step 4 of oil cover but with a 20cm length of ribbon. Write or machine embroider 'vinegar'. Press on the reverse.

SUNNY PARTY BUNTING

YOU'LL NEED:
Co-ordinating fabrics from artgalleryfabrics.com
Plain cotton fabric, orange, mint
Calico
Mini ricrac trim, peach, yellow
Orange bias binding
White tissue paper
Note: 0.5cm seam allowance

1 Using template A, cut out six flags, two from each patterned fabric. Cut a back for each one from cream calico and pin right sides together, stitch a seam around the curved edge, leave the top straight edge open. Clip the curve close to the stitches or use pinking shears, turn right side out and iron flat. Set aside.

2 Using template B, cut out four flags from orange fabric and three from mint fabric. Back each flag with its corresponding colour using the same technique as step 1.

3 Stitch a length of mini ricrac, trim around the curve of the plain coloured flags. Iron on the reverse.

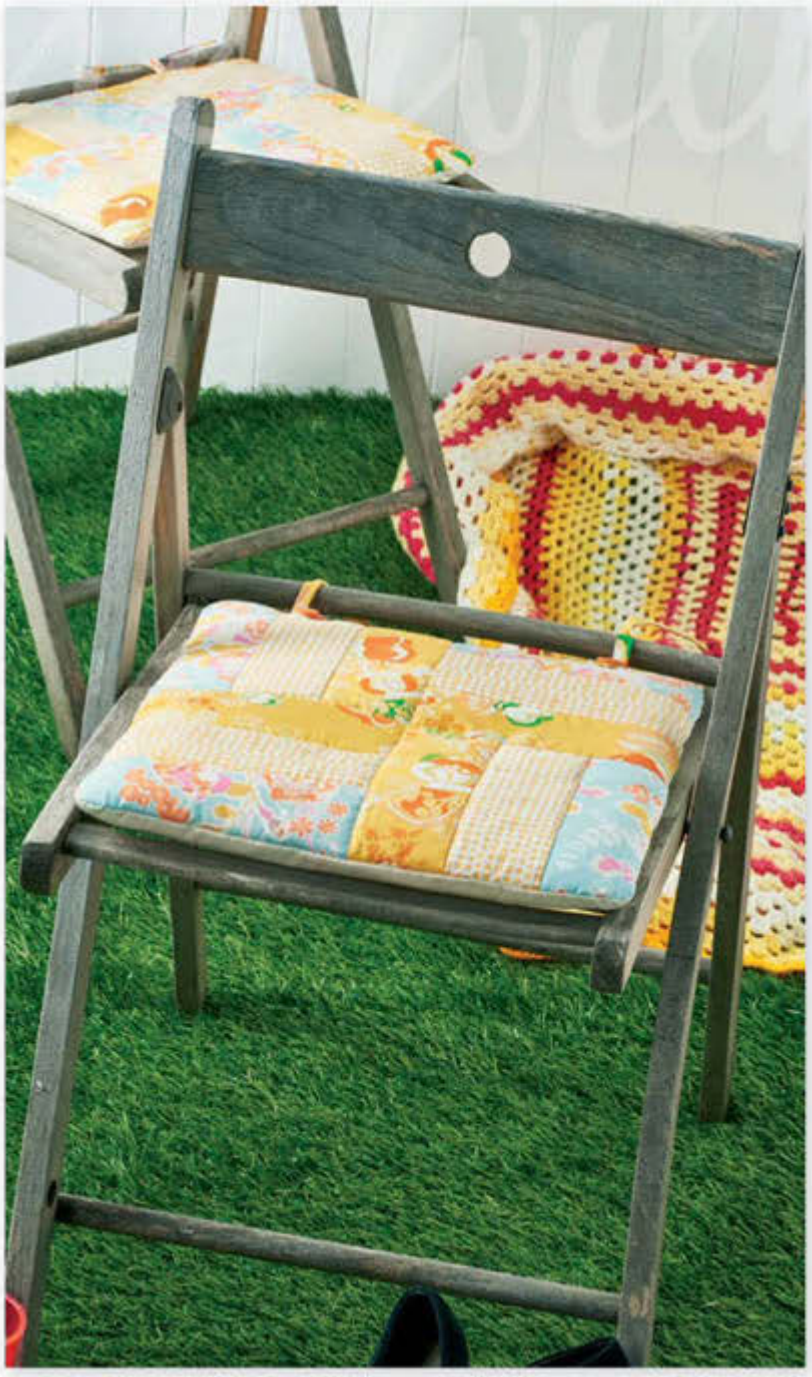
4 Trace the words from the templates onto separate pieces of tissue paper and pin each one to a plain flag. Hand or machine stitch over the pen then tear the paper away. Iron on the reverse.

5 Take your chosen length of orange bias binding, tuck in the raw end and fold the tape over into the binding shape. Stitch close to the edge leaving approx. 15cm at each end with no flag, tuck the straight raw edge of each flag, one at a time into the folded bias alternating between pattern and plain flag as shown.

We love... Machine embroidery

- Free motion embroidery gives us the ability to draw with our sewing machine. It's a fantastic technique for embellishing projects and highlighting certain elements. Your sewing machine model should stock a foot specifically for this.
- If you're looking to upgrade your sewing machine take a look at the Janome MC8900QCP. At £1,999 it is very much an investment but it's capable of 1,000 stitches per minute and a touch-screen or jog-dial that allows you to select from 975 stitch options, including alphabets and numbers, three monogram fonts and 11 buttonhole styles. It also has a built-in memory to store all your tried and tested stitch combinations.





SEAT PADS

YOU'LL NEED:
(For 36cm square seat pads)
Three fat quarter floral fabrics from artgalleryfabrics.com
Plain cotton fabric
36cm foam seat pads
Lightweight quilt wadding
Buttons

1 From each of the three patterned fabrics cut four 7cm x 19cm strips. Stitch the strips together in trios along the long edges with a 5mm seam allowance and press.

2 Sew the striped squares together into a larger panel so the stripes radiate out like a pinwheel. Press and lay onto quilt wadding. Pin the layers together and trim the wadding to the edges of the panel.

3 Top stitch along the seam lines with a coordinating colour thread to quilt the panel. Cut a 37cm square of plain cotton fabric. Pin to the quilted panel, right sides together and sew around the outside with a 5mm seam allowance, leaving a 10cm gap in the centre of one edge.

4 Turn the seat cover right sides out and press. Roll up the foam pads and push through the gap, allowing it to unroll once inside. Fold in the raw edge of the gap and slip stitch closed.

5 Cut two 4cm x 30cm strips of fabric, for each cushion. Fold in 1cm on all the edges of each strip before folding in half lengthways, enclosing the raw edges. Pin and top stitch.

6 Fold the strips in half and pin to the edge of the seat pad in line with the chair back struts that the cushion is for. Stitch in place, adding a coloured button over the fold. Tie the pad to the chair with the loose ends of the strip.



WOODEN MATS

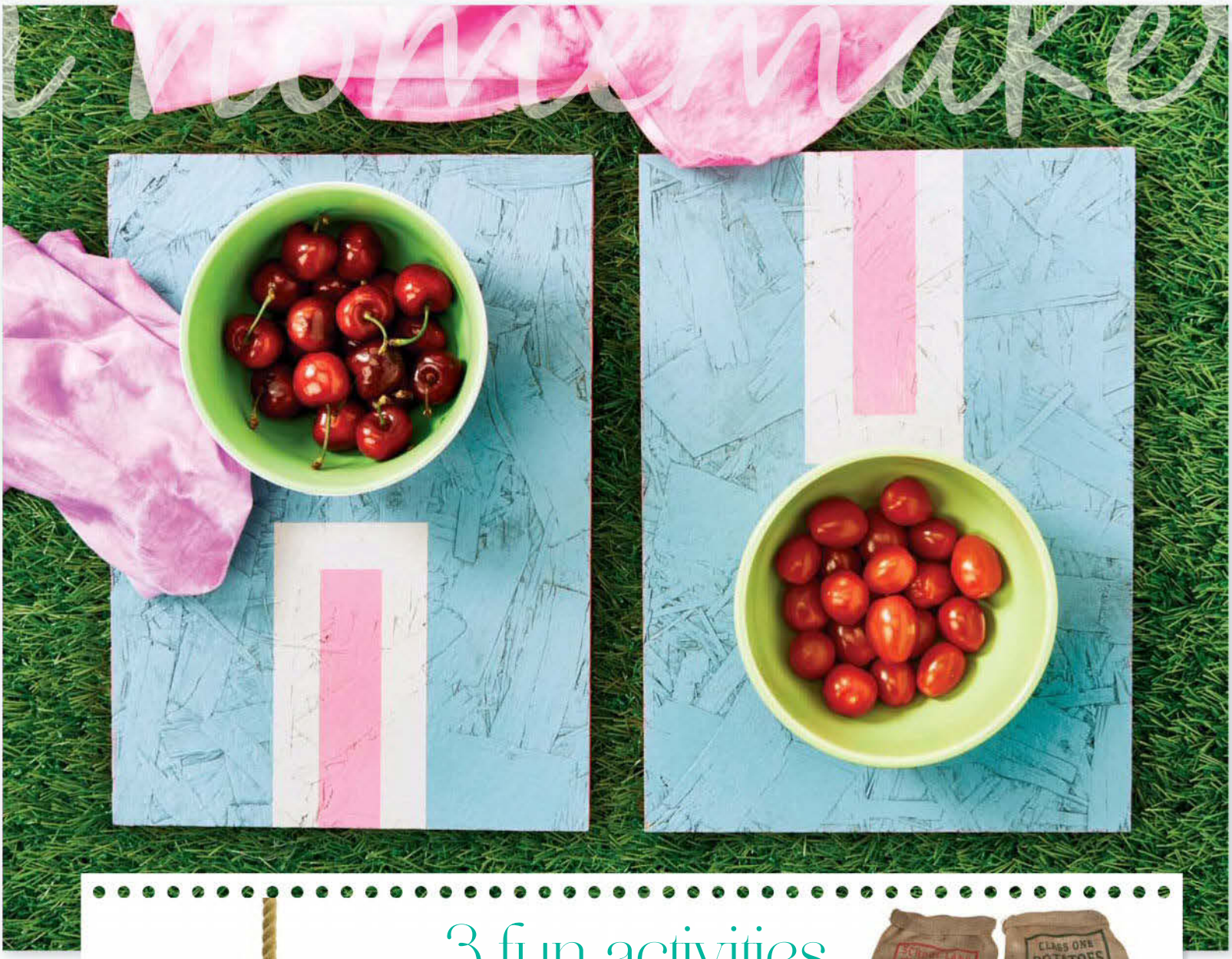
YOU'LL NEED:
Strand board
Heavy duty spray adhesive
Rust-Oleum painters touch, blue
Emulsion paint, pink, natural
Cream coloured felt
Masking tape
Paint brush
Scissors

1 Spray paint one side of four 25cm x 35cm strand board panels. Ensure that the paint covers evenly and leave to dry.

2 Mask a 8cm x 16cm strip on one side of the painted rectangle in the centre of one of the shorter sides. Brush natural coloured paint inside the masked area. Lift the masking tape as soon as you have finished painting.

3 When the paint is dry mask off a smaller strip in the centre of the natural strip. Position the edge of the masking tape on the edge of the natural strip. Paint this inner strip, and the edges, of each mat with pink.

4 Cut out four rectangles of cream coloured felt to the same dimensions as the mats and then stick to the base with the heavy duty spray adhesive.



3 fun activities



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DIY: MAKE SURE YOUR PREPARE THE GROUND UNDERNEATH YOUR SWING WITH SOFT RUBBER AND CHIPPINGS TO ENSURE A SAFE LANDING.



BUY: GO BOWLING OUTSIDE WITH A SET OF PRETTY SKITTLES, £40, **LAURAASHLEY.COM**.

DIY: MAKE A DIY SWING BALL BY FIXING STURDY ROPE TO A FOAM BALL, TYING TO A TREE OR POLE AND USING LARGE RACKETS TO BAT IT BACK TO EACH OTHER.



BUY: GET THE KIDS WORN OUT WITH A RETRO FAVOURITE. SACK RACE KIT, £20,

DIY: FOR MORE FUN WHY NOT WHIP UP A PINATA? SEE HOW TO MAKE MINI ONES AT **HOMEMAKERMAGAZINE.CO.UK/PROJECTS/MINI-PINATA**

STURDY CANDEL STICKS

YOU'LL NEED:

Two bannister spindles
Pine strip wood
Decorative moulding (the same width as the strip wood)
5cm discs of 0.5cm deep wood
Strong adhesive
Rust-Oleum chalky finish paint, blue
Crown paint, orange
Saw, electric drill with 20mm drill bit
Mitre block
Screws and screw driver
Ruler, right angle and pencil

1 Cut your bansiter spindle to size. Drill out the area that the candle will be placed with a 20mm drill bit approximately 2.5cm deep. Once the holes have been drilled this top part of the candle stick is cut off.

Cut 5cm discs from 0.5cm wood and drill a hole in the centre. Make a hole in the centre base of the candle holder part and reconnect the candle holder to the candle stick inserting the wooden disc in between with a screw.

2 To make a plinth for the candle stick cut a square from the pine strip wood and then four pieces of decorative moulding to fit around the edges of the square. Trim the corners of each piece with a mitre block so that each corners fit snuggly. Stick the moulding to the edges of the square with strong adhesive and leave to dry. Drill a hole in the centre of the plinth and then use a screw to connect the candle to the base plinth.

3 Sand away any rough edges and then wipe away any dust. Paint the outside of the candle stick with the blue paint. When the paint is dry, with a fine paint brush paint two orange rings around the turned area.



VISIT HOMEMAKERMAGAZINE.CO.UK FOR THIS CUTE KIDS' PROJECT

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London's green spaces

Wayne Hemingway argues the case for naming our capital a National Park

As big buildings fly up, and populations grow, I have been become increasingly intrigued about the campaign for London to become a National Park. The website **greaterlondonnationalpark.org.uk** paints a vivid picture of what it would be like if the capital was to be crowned with the title. The hypothetical description is pretty persuasive and states, "Recognised as one of the world's most important urban habitats, green, blue and open spaces occupy over 60% of London. More than 1,300 'Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation' cover 19% of the National Park. London-wide, the capital is home to more than 1,500 species of flowering plants and 300 species of bird." When laid out like this it does seem crazy that the city is not already named as part of the UK's portfolio of National Parks.

When we are in our offices and homes it's easy to forget the value of London's non-built environment, and for that matter the landscape of most cities in the UK. Being a runner, a cyclist, and owning an exercise-loving dog,

"WHEN WE ARE IN OUR OFFICES AND HOMES IT'S EASY TO FORGET THE VALUE OF LONDON'S NON BUILT ENVIRONMENT."



I have become intimate with many of London's green spaces and wonderful canal towpaths. From my office the dog can be swimming in the almost-always-deserted Welsh Harp Reservoir in seconds, before we run across the relatively unknown Fryent Country Park, then into Barn Hill Open Space where you are in a wooded wilderness until you emerge from the overgrowth and a giant Wembley Stadium smacks you in the face. Many Londoners know how easy it is to get a little disorientated on Hampstead Heath and plenty of us have been within metres of deer in Golders Hill Park or Richmond Park.

I remember once, during marathon training, running from central London along the Grand Union canal heading out of the city and getting picked up by Mrs H a couple of hours later close to Heathrow, then getting changed in the car before checking in for a flight. Most people would probably be surprised that there was any green space between the sprawl of central London and that monster of an airport at all! Let alone that you could run almost all the way surrounded by some green space.

There are a number of reasons why a Greater London National Park would be of great benefit:

1. Increasingly, people choose to live in urban centres. In the UK 80% of the population live on 7% of the land. Maybe surprisingly, living densely like this actually protects farm land and rural spaces. To give London 'National Park' status would ease pressure on land outside the city limits.

2. The prestigious title would be another marketing tool to keep London high in the hierarchy of great world cities and would reinforce the city's reputation for creative 'out of the box' thinking.

3. It could encourage investment in new and existing green spaces and this would contribute to reducing pollution, preventing flooding and promoting wildlife, thus impacting positively on the happiness, health and social well-being of London's inhabitants.

It seems to be one of those ideas that, at first, raises eyebrows but when you think about it deeply simply makes sense. And if London were to start the trend, maybe more of our great cities would follow.



Craft with Carol

Homemaker regular **Carol Smillie** shares her top tips for upcycling second-hand treasures



Carol Smillie is the newest face of British Heart Foundation and loves upcycling furniture from the charity shop! Read on to discover what she's been transforming this month.

"Often way down the to-do list after the bedroom and living room, I feel that the bathroom is a place that tends to get neglected when it comes to sprucing up our homes. But it shouldn't be – as the place where we go first in the morning and last thing at night, surely we want it to be a pleasant one. Which is why I decided to finally revamp the worn out little cabinet that I picked up in the charity shop a while ago and pop it in my bathroom as a shiny new feature.

After sanding, I opted to paint the cabinet in a lovely pale blue. This is obviously quite traditional when it comes to bathroom colour schemes, so I added a couple of fun, quirky finishes to make it a bit different. I had some scraps of pretty cherry blossom patterned wallpaper left over from a previous renovation, which I used to line the insides, then substituted the cupboard handles for little red plastic toothbrushes instead, a touch that all my guests tell me they adore!

Continuing the coastal colour palette of white and blue, I invested in a few pretty candles and soaps, then gave the edge of my towels a colourful trim. It's amazing the difference a few carefully thought out touches can make to a small, basic room. Despite being quite small, this is a cabinet worthy of Narnia status, as it now happily holds a multitude of lotions, bottles and other bits that were cluttering up the room, leaving a clear and calm space – for now at least!"

BATHROOM CABINET

YOU'LL NEED:

Old pine bathroom cabinet
Glasspaper, medium and fine
Paint brushes and rollers
Masking tape
Paint, Gentle Sky from Little Greene, littlegreene.com
Two new brightly coloured toothbrushes
Plastic tubes
Nuts and bolts
Scrap of wallpaper
Spray adhesive
Ruler, pencil and craft knife

{1} Remove the doors from the cabinet before the handles. Thoroughly wash and clean all parts with warm soapy water and leave to dry.

{2} Lightly sand the cabinet first with the medium and then the fine glasspaper and mask around the mirrors to create a clean edge.

{3} Paint all the parts of the cabinet using a brush on the edges and a small roller on all the flat parts. Leave to dry and then apply a second coat. Remove the masking tape.

{4} Cut a piece of wallpaper to the same dimensions as the inside back of the cabinet and stick in place with spray adhesive. Pieces of the wallpaper are also stuck to the inside of the two doors.

{5} To make the toothbrush handles, drill two small holes in the handle of each brush the same distance apart as the holes in the doors where the original handles went. You will need to put spacers behind the brushes to hold them away from the door to create space for your hand. You could use small plastic tubes or small pieces of dowel rod with a hole drilled through the centre.

{6} Thread the bolt through the front of the brush, through the spacer and then through the hole in the door. From behind, put a washer on and then screw up the bolt. Repeat on the other three holes.

BHF Furniture & Electrical shops are ideal for anyone looking for unique items on a budget. The stores are always looking for donations of unwanted household goods – anything from chairs, beds, wardrobes, TVs and small electricals. Find out more at **bhf.org.uk** or call **0800 915 3000**



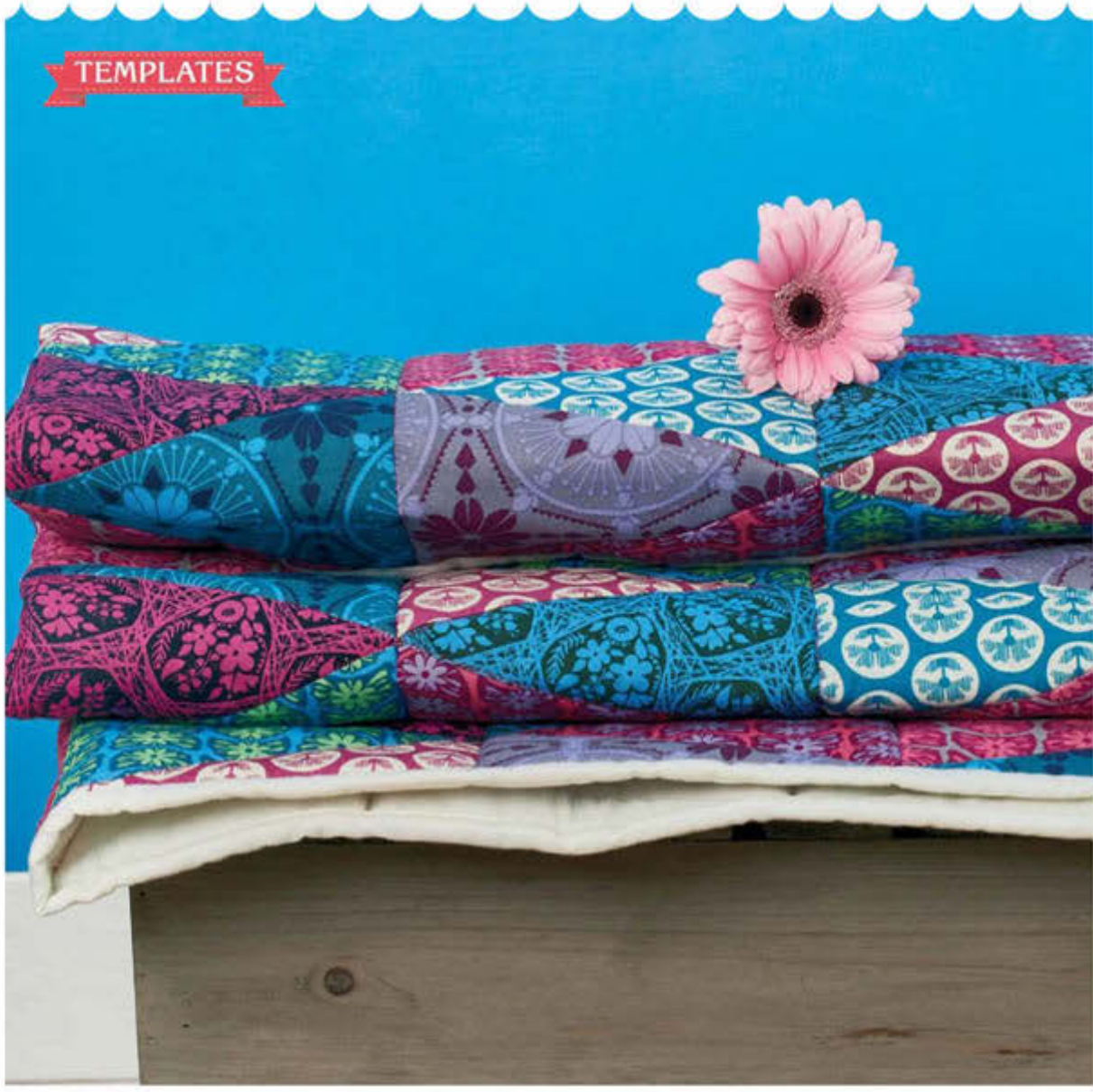
TRY PIECES OF DRIFTWOOD AS HANDLES INSTEAD FOR A NAUTICAL THEME

TRIANGLE QUILT

Turn fat quarters into a gorgeous patchwork quilt

If you have already tackled a patchwork quilt consisting of traditional squares, why not try your hand at this geometric design? Replicating the patterns of a string of summer bunting, this quirky design is simpler to make than it might first appear. Recreate this for yourself in the pink, blue and purple hues of Anna Maria Hornor's stunning FreeSpirit designs. Made with love, this patchwork quilt will become a future family heirloom whether sewn for yourself or as a special gift. The finished item looks rather expensive but it doesn't have to be a costly project; patchwork is perfect for using up the collection of fat quarters you've built up over the years.

TEMPLATES



YOU'LL NEED:
Nine fat quarters of cotton fabric, we used FreeSpirit True Colours by Anna Maria Horner from makeitcoats.com
Quilt wadding, 150cm
Plain backing fabric, 150cm

DIMENSIONS: 110 x 117cm

QUILT

{1} Press all your fabric to remove the packing creases. Cut a 16cm wide strip from each of the FQs and cut triangles from these strips using our downloadable template as a guide. Keep the 'half triangles' from the ends of each strip, these will be used to keep the edges of the quilt square.

{2} Arrange 15 triangles in a line arranging the different fabric designs in a repeating pattern. Rotate every alternate piece 180 degrees to make a straight strip, and add a half piece to each end. Lay out more strips, offsetting the prints by a few triangles each time so that no two pieces of the same pattern touch and the 'upward' points in one strip line up with the 'downward' points in the next.

{3} Stitch the triangles of each strip right sides together with a 5mm seam allowance. Allow the fabrics on either side of a point to overlap slightly to make a 5mm seam allowance that is hidden when the strips are stitched together. Once all the triangles are sewn into strips, pin these right sides together, matching up the points of the triangles. Stitch the two strips together with a 5mm seam allowance.

{4} Cut more fabric as needed, stitch into strips and join together until the quilt is the desired size. Press the quilt top with a steam iron to set the seams. Trim the edges of the quilt top straight.

{5} Lay the backing fabric on a flat surface, place the wadding on top and arrange the quilt top centrally over this, ensuring there is at least 5cm excess backing and wadding on all sides. Pin the layers together at regular intervals.

{6} Quilt the layers with a machine, stitching along the lines of the pattern to create a series of padded triangles. Start from the centre of the quilt and work your way out on either side in all directions.

{7} Trim the quilt wadding to the same size as the patchwork panel. Fold in the backing fabric and pin over the edges of the quilt to make a 1.5cm wide edging with the raw edges tucked under, and mitre the corners neatly. Top stitch the edging in place, 1mm from the inner fold to finish.



FIND MORE QUILTING FABRICS AT **MAKEIT COATS.COM**

Maker tip...

Corinne says, "I was excited to discover the True Colours fabrics from FreeSpirit at ***makeitcoats.com****. This collection of fabrics provides contemporary designs by some of today's best-known designers, as well as exciting new artists. Each fabric design can stand alone, or be effortlessly combined with others from the collection."*

OUR MAKER...

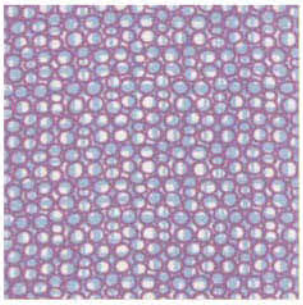
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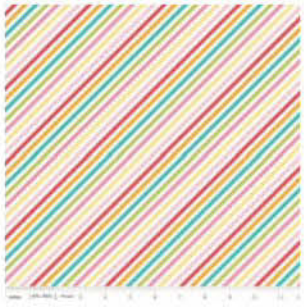


SUMMER FUN
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OUTDOOR DINING FROM RETREAT HOME, RETREATHOME.COM

Why we love... Summer days

Our interiors columnist, author and stylist **Ellie Tennant**, reveals what inspires her about summertime and shares her top seasonal picks from the shops…



If the sun is shining, one of my favourite ways to while away a summer's day is with a picnic – in a pretty meadow, on the beach, or just in the park. I am a big fan of gathering a load of squishy cushions for an outdoor feat and I also love Tweedmill's recycled wool blankets, which are made in Wales using leftover yarn that's woven into random but rather lovely pure wool rugs. No two are the same and they're perfect for picnics – just the right size, in durable wool, but not too precious to be thrown down on grass or sand. I've seen these blankets for sale all over the place this summer, at various prices, but the National Trust Shop has them for just £15 each.

You don't need much for the perfect picnic – kit-wise, take your blanket, a knife, some cups and a bottle-opener. Refreshments? Keep it simple for leisurely snacking throughout the afternoon and no need for plates or cutlery. I take wine, a baguette, cheese and a jar of honey. Yes, honey. Not the bland type sold in the supermarket in a plastic tube – the real stuff – raw, golden, unpasteurised, filled with goodness. My father is a bee-keeper, so I've been lucky enough to enjoy a limitless supply of this sweet treat all my life and now consider any feast incomplete without it. I drizzle it on cheese, add it to salad dressings and smear it on apple and ginger cakes.

I confess, I'm a bit of a geek when it comes to the sacred geometry of the honeycomb – the patterns and processes have fascinated me ever since I was a child. It's amazing to think that the perfect, tessellating hexagons are a product of orderly teamwork in a hive that can contain up to 35,000 individuals, who fly 55,000 miles

Why we love...

in total together (the same as one and a half times around the world) to produce just one pound of honey. It's un-bee-lievably inspiring.

No wonder, then, that homeware collections are all a-buzz this season with bee-themed designs. There are playful honeycomb clocks and vases at ASDA, cute bee cushions at Tesco Direct and chic hexagon wall mirrors with a golden finish at Oliver Bonas.

Elsewhere, the new range of geometric hexagonal travertine tiles at Topps Tiles caught my eye. They look beautiful used on kitchen walls as a quirky, uneven splash-back feature.



HEXAGON RUSTIC TRAVERTINE TILES, £3.99 EACH (£65.22 PER SQ M), TOPPSTILES.COM



BEE CUSHION, £14.99, BY DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRE, AT TESCO.COM



SMALL HEXAGON MIRROR ON CHAIN, £25, OLIVERBONAS.COM (AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER)



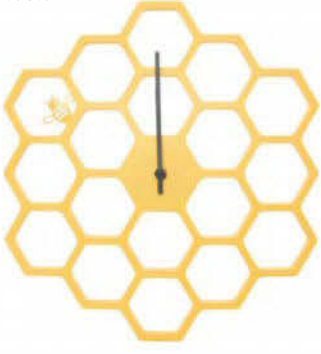
AMBER HONEY POT HONEY JAR, £5, WILKO.COM

Wilkinson's sweet honey pot caught my eye, it's shaped like a traditional honey pot and is covered with adorable little bees. When I got married a few summers ago, we gave our guests little jars of honey as favours, with wooden dippers, which you can find for 99p each at Woodworks Craft Supplies. I made jar label stickers on printing website Moo (**moo.com**) and used a vintage bee motif from a magical free (non-commercial). Why not draw one yourself or download a little bee illustration from the Homemaker website?

If your garden isn't already buzzing with bees, encourage them with bee-friendly flowering shrubs (they love lilac, vibernum and wisteria), or install a small 'hotel' box, which provides shelter for solitary bees. Remember: they pollinate our food crops for us, so we need bees to be happy. Here are three of the best bee houses:



ELLIE TENNANT'S HOMEMADE HONEY WEDDING FAVOURS



HONEYCOMB CLOCK, £12, GEORGE HOME AT ASDA.CO.UK







BEE HOUSE IN GREEN, £12.99, ANJOHOME.CO.UK; THREE STOREY BEE AND INSECT HOTEL, £39.95, CLARELOVES.CO.UK; WOODEN BEE HOUSE, £16.95, WHITESTUFF.COM

AMIGURUMI BUMBLEBEES

These cute crochet bumblebees are sure to be an instant hit. Mix and match the wings and flowers so yours are unique. They look great on a mobile or as a toys.

YOU'LL NEED:

3.5mm hook

DK crochet cotton in black, yellow and white, from yeoman-yarns.co.uk

Body

3.5mm hook, start with yellow

❍ **Rnd 1**: make a ring for 6 stitches (6 total)
❍ **Rnd 2**: work 2 dc in each stitch (12 total)
❍ **Rnd 3**: 6 times *2dc in first st, 1dc in next st* (18 total)
❍ **Rnd 4**: 6 times *2dc in first st, 1dc in next 2 st* (24 total)
❍ **Rnd 5**: 6 times *2dc in first st, 1dc in next 3 st* (30 total)
❍ **Rnd 6**: 6 times *2dc in first st, 1dc in next 4 st* (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 7**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 8**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 9**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 10**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 11**: Change to black yarn, 1dc in ea st (36 total) Add safety eyes between rounds 5 and 6.
❍ **Rnd 12**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 13**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 14**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 15**: Change to yellow yarn, 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 16**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 17**: 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 18**: Change to black yarn, 1dc in ea st (36 total)
❍ **Rnd 19**: 6 times *dc2tog, 1dc in next 4 st* (30 total)
❍ **Rnd 20**: 6 times *dc2tog, 1dc in next 3 st* (24 total)
❍ **Rnd 21**: 6 times *dc2tog, 1dc in next 2 st* (18 total)
❍ **Rnd 22**: 6 times *dc2tog, 1dc in next st* (12 total) Add lots of toy stuffing.
❍ **Rnd 23**: 6 times *dc2tog* (6 total)
❍ **Rnd 24**: dc3tog, dc2tog, ch4, sl st in 2nd chain from hook, sl st in next 2 ch and into last st in the round to make the stinger. (3ch-long tail)
Fasten off and tidy away the tail.

large wings

3.5mm hook, make in white

❍ **Rnd 1**: make a ring for 6 stitches (6 total)
❍ **Rnd 2**: work 2 dc in each stitch (12 total)
❍ **Rnd 3**: 6 times *2dc in first st, 1dc in next st*, sl st in next st (18 total)
Fasten off, leave a tail for sewing.

small wings

3.5mm hook, make in white

❍ **Rnd 1**: make a ring for 6 stitches (6 total)
❍ **Rnd 2**: sl st into first st.
Fasten off, leave a tail for sewing.

flowers

3.5mm hook, make in white

❍ **Rnd 1**: make a magic ring, working into the ring 5 times *ch2, 1htr, ch2, sl st*, pull the ring tight (5 petals)
Fasten off, leave a tail for sewing.

To finish sew the wings to the top of the body, either just the large wings alone or large and small wings together for more detail. Embroider the mouth using the black yarn, add a bit of blusher to the cheeks and sew on the flower accessory for a bit of extra cuteness!

OUR MAKER...
IRENE STRANGE





IMAGE: STYLISH HOME SEWING, £14.99, PUBLISHED BY CICO BOOKS. PHOTO © SUSSIE BELL

Meet our new columnist

THE NAMESAKE AUTHOR OF
TORIE JAYNE'S STYLISH HOME SEWING

An outdoor occasion

Give your summer dining the **Torie Jayne** treatment

Enjoying meals outside, for me, is one of the greatest joys of warm and sunny summer days. Whether I'm throwing a garden party or an impromptu barbecue for friends and family, I love to transform the space and dress the table to make a real occasion out of it. Here are some of my ideas for making the most of your outdoor area; whether you have a spacious lawn, a compact patio or a bijou balcony.

In the detail

Several plant containers scattered around the dining area help the space feel organic and natural; fill them with herbs for a delicate scent. I like to customise old pots by decoupaging with fabric; just make sure to finish them off with a waterproof top seal for added protection.

Pretty tissue paper pompoms look perfectly at home in the garden and can easily be made in sizes and colours to suit the event. Hang them from trees or string a bunch onto bakers twine and suspend above the dining area.

Fresh flowers always provide a special finishing touch. I adorn the table with lots of mini milk bottles decorated with washi tape, filled with a variety of hand-picked blooms.

Paper butterflies made with a punch are a quick and inexpensive decorative addition. Make them in your choice of colours and simply scatter across the table like confetti, or glue the bodies with the wings fanned out to the outside of candle-filled jars. For true attention to detail glue them to strips of ribbon wrapped around napkins.

Wine and dine

Make outdoor lunches and barbecues relaxed affairs by allowing guests to help themselves to cutlery placed in recycled tin cans. Spray-paint these or wrap them in pretty paper for a pop of colour. Paper serviettes can be displayed in the same way, this also stops a pile of them from blowing away. Serve your favourite seasonal drinks, fruit smoothies, or homemade iced-teas in glass jars, adding pretty printed paper straws for a decorative touch. For larger gatherings, store bottled drinks in colourful enamel buckets filled with ice so your guests can help themselves.

Light it right

Garden lighting is imperative if your get-together spills into the evening. How you illuminate the scene after the sun goes down can dramatically enhance the atmosphere. Recycled glass jars filled with twinkling tea lights are a practical, inexpensive way to light pathways and garden staircases; your guests won't stumble in the dark and a breeze shouldn't blow them out. Solar powered hanging lamps are easy to use because no cables or plugs are needed and they come in a host of colours so you can match them to your theme. Hang from parasols over the table or decorate trees with smaller versions. Fairy lights bring a magical quality to the garden, wrapped around garden arches they create a special entrance for guests.



Nothing dresses up your outdoor dining like a new tablecloth. This one has a broderie anglaise panel in the centre that acts as a runner. Curtain weights fill secret pockets behind each corner and help hold the tablecloth in place.

TABLECLOTH

YOU'LL NEED:
Cotton fabric, one piece 40cm wider and longer than the dimensions of your table top, two pieces 12cm x 12cm square
Broderie anglaise cotton and trim
Matching thread
Coordinating embroidery thread
Four curtain weights

{1} Cut out your fabric to size with a 40cm drop. Press, and lay the fabric on you work surface, right side up. Cut four pieces of the trim: two at the length plus 3cm, and two at the width plus 3cm.

{2} Pin a length of the trim down the side of the tablecloth so that right sides are together and raw edges are aligned. Stitch 1cm from the edge, starting 1cm in from the top corner and stopping 1cm away from the bottom edge. Repeat with remaining sides. Press the seams open then press the raw edges under the tablecloth. Fold in half diagonally at each corner and pin the broderie trim together to create mitre corners. Stitch the edging together and trim off any excess. Pin and tack the 1cm hem.

{3} For the hidden pockets, fold your two squares of fabric in half to create triangles, and cut on the fold. Over-lock the raw edges. Take each of your four triangles of fabric and fold the diagonal edge over by 1cm and press. Using a 6mm seam allowance, stitch this down. Fold over remaining raw edges 1cm and press. Using a 6mm seam allowance stitch in place. Position the hemmed triangle pieces on the underside of your tablecloth, matching up the corners, pin and tack in position. Edge stitch round the tablecloth to hold hem and corners in place. Remove tacking. Machine stitch 8mm from hem to create a twin needle effect all around edge.

{4} Carefully cut round the design of your cutwork fabric. Lay it on top of the tablecloth in your desired position, pin along centre and tack in place. Remove pins and zigzag stitch around outside edge. Remove tacking and press. Using embroidery thread, back-stitch the panel to the tablecloth using the design of the cutwork as your guide. Press, place on table and then insert the weights into the pockets.

FOR TABLES WITH A PARASOL SIMPLY ADD A LARGE CURTAIN EYELET TO THE MIDDLE OF THE CLOTH.

Be inspired to stitch bold prints



READ THE STORIES BEHIND SOME OF JULIE PATERSON'S ICONIC FABRIC DESIGNS in this new book that visually explores her life and work. Any fan of print and pattern will adore flicking through the pages and be left full of motivation to whiz up some bright cushions – always a fun way to freshen your interior for summer. Find more images and a review of the book on our website homemakermagazine.co.uk



Clothbound: Iconic fabric designs. Stories of a Handmade Process by Julie Paterson (£25, Murdoch books)

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Sew a deep-buttoned cushion pad

Emulate a studded sofa with this simple technique



The second in our sewing skills series of cushion makes, this button-studded cushion is lovely as a comfy addition to a traditional wooden chair. A reversible design means that you get double the value for your efforts, and the covered buttons add the ultimate handmade designer touch. Why not make a larger version to top a sturdy wooden trunk or bench; or for a more luxurious make, sew one up in velvet and add silk-covered buttons – just the thing for a glam bedroom.

YOU'LL NEED:

Plain fabric from purple-stitches.com
Patterned fabric from plushaddict.co.uk
Matching thread
Button-covering tool and buttons
Cushion pad
Concealed zip
Long needle and strong thread
Ruler and pencil
Scissors and pins
Sewing machine
Zipper foot for sewing machine

CUSHION

{1} Cut out two squares; one in plain fabric and one in patterned, to the same dimensions as the cushion pad with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Neaten the edges by either sewing a zipzag stitch or using an overlocker.

{2} Pin and stitch the two pieces of the cushion together leaving a gap in the base of the cushion to insert the zip. Stitch the concealed zip into the opening using a zipper foot. With fabric right side facing though the opening (the cover should not be turned through at this point) place the opened zip face down

{3} Position the slider approximately 3cms away from the end of the stitching, put back into the cover and pin in place. You will need to uncurl the teeth with your fingertips as you stitch along the opening.

OUR MAKER...
AMANDA WALKER

HEAD TO PAGE 112
AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO COVER BUTTONS

{4} Back stitch, and then sew the other side of the zip in place. Carefully thread the zip slider through to the right side, turn the cover the right way out and press.

BUTTONS

{1} Mark the positions of the four buttons on both sides of the cushion cover. Use a ruler and pencil to draw dots where you want to add the buttons. Indicate the positions on the other side by pushing a pin through the two layers of the cover at the pencil dot and marking the reverse side where the pin point exits.

{2} The pad can now be placed inside, making sure it is pushed well into the corners.

{3} Next cover the buttons; four with plain fabric and four patterned. Cut out the discs of fabric using the template from the button packaging, place the disc of fabric wrong side up over the corresponding size hole on the rubber part of the tool, press the uncovered button into the cavity and fold over all the raw edges in towards the centre.

{4} Place the back of the button over the shank and then use the plastic part of the tool to press on the back of the button.

{5} Thread the long needle with strong doubled-up thread and tie a knot with the two ends. Pass the needle through the cushion from one side to the other following the marks made earlier. Pass the needle through the hole in the shank of the button and then pass the needle back through the cushion.

{6} Pull the threads tight and fasten these by making a knot; then stitch on the other button, securing the threads in the same way. Place the plain button on the patterned side of the cushion and the patterned button on the plain side. Repeat the process on the three remaining positions. The cushion will end up pulled-in at intervals on both sides creating a deep-buttoned effect.



Ways with your... PATCH FABRICS

Sew a set of adorably sweet makes with your free gift

We've got a real treat for you this issue with five gorgeous fabrics featuring exclusive summery designs. We know you've probably got a big list of amazing stitchy goodies to make with your free stash but if you are stuck for ideas why not try Cheryl Owen's pretty craft room makes? Her collection of quirky creations really will brighten up your crafting sessions. Plus we have even more pretty patch makes available on our website.



SCISSOR KEEPER DRESS

YOU'LL NEED:
12cm x 15cm of sew-in interfacing
3cm x 6cm of iron-on interfacing
Matching sewing thread
Hand sewing needle
Bodkin and cotton wool

DIMENSIONS: 7.5cm x 11cm
Note: 0.6cm seam allowance. Stitch seams with right sides facing.

{1} Using the templates cut two dresses from lime dotted fabric and one dress from the interfacing. Tack one dress right side up on the interfacing. Press the iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of pink circles fabric and cut out a collar. With right sides facing up, pin the collar to the interfaced dress. Stitch close to lower edges of the collar.

{2} Cut one skirt from the pink circles fabric and sew-in interfacing. Tack the skirt right side up on the interfacing. Press under 5mm, then 1cm, on the upper edge of the skirt. Stitch in place to hem the upper edge.

{3} Trim a 4.5cm square of green scallops fabric for the pocket. Press under 1cm on one edge and stitch in place to hem the pocket, press under 0.6cm on the other edges. With right sides facing up, pin the pocket to the centre of the skirt with the hem 1.5cm below the hemmed edge of the skirt. Stitch close to the side and lower edges of the pocket. With right sides facing up, pin the skirt to the interfaced dress, matching the raw edges.

{4} Cut a 2.5cm x 15cm bias strip of pink birds fabric for the loop. Fold lengthwise in half and stitch the long edge. Trim the seam allowance then turn through with a bodkin. Fold the loop in half and pin the ends to the right side of the interfaced dress at the centre of the upper edge.

{5} Pin the dresses together. Stitch the outer edges, leaving a gap to turn through on the lower edge. Clip the corners and snip the curves. Turn right side out and press the outer edges. Slipstitch the gap closed. Slip a small piece of cotton wool into the bottom of the skirt to protect the scissor tips.

CRAFTY HEN

YOU'LL NEED:
Cotton embroidery thread
Matching sewing thread
Handsewing and embroidery needles
Bodkin
8cm x 12cm rectangle of thin card
Toy stuffing

DIMENSIONS: 11cm x 14cm
Note: 0.6cm seam allowance. Stitch seams with right sides facing.

{1} Print and cut out the online template. Trim a pair of heads from green scallops fabric, one pair of bodies and one base from white floral fabric, one beak to the fold from lime dotted fabric and three 2.5cm x 7.5cm bias strips from pink circles fabric for the loops. Embroider the eyes on the right side of the head with three strands of embroidery thread.

{2} Stitch the heads to the bodies along the neck edges, matching the notches. Press the seams open. Fold the beak in half and stitch the unnotched edge. Clip the corner and turn right side out. Pin the beak to the right side of one hen between the crosses, matching the notches.

{3} Fold the loops lengthwise in half and stitch the long edges. Trim the seam allowances and turn right side out with a bodkin, fold in half. Pin the ends of one loop to the right side of one head at the dot, pin the other loops either side. Pin and stitch the hens together, leaving a 6.5cm gap on the straight back edge and leaving the lower edge open. Snip the curves. Finger press the seam open.

{4} Pin the base to bottom of the hen, matching the notches then stitch. Snip the curves and turn right side out. Draw the base on the card, flip the template to draw the other half to make a complete base and cut out the card base. Insert the card into the hen and position it on the fabric base. Fill the hen with wood shavings or toy filling. Slipstitch the gap closed with small stitches.

{5} Trim two pairs of wings from pink circles fabric. Stitch the wings together in pairs, leaving a gap on the straight edge. Clip the corners and snip the curves. Turn the wings right side out and press them flat. Slipstitch the gaps closed. Pin the wings to either side of the hen, matching the crosses and broken lines. Slipstitch to the hen along the broken lines.



SAUSAGE DOG

YOU'LL NEED:
Cotton embroidery thread
Matching sewing thread
Handsewing, embroidery and long needles
Toy stuffing
Four buttons

DIMENSIONS: 11mc x 20cm
Note: 0.6cm seam allowance. Stitch seams with right sides facing.

{1} Using the template, trim one pair of bodies and a tummy from lime dotted fabric, two pairs of ears from pink circles fabric and a pair of tails from green fabric. Embroider the eyes on the right side of the bodies using three strands of embroidery thread.

{2} Stitch the ears together in pairs, leaving the short upper edges open. Clip the corners and snip the curves. Turn right side out. Press the ears. Pin and tack each ear to a body between the dots on top of the head, facing forward.

{3} Stitch the tails together, leaving the short edges open. Snip the curves and turn right side out. Stuff the tail. Pin the opening closed. Pin the tail to one body, matching A and B.

{4} Pin the bodies together. Stitch the bodies C,A, B, D. Pin and stitch one edge of the tummy to one body C to D, matching the notches. Stitch the other edge of the tummy to the body, leaving a gap between the notches. Clip the corner and snip the curves. Finger press the seams open. Turn the dog right side out and stuff firmly. Slipstitch the gap closed.

{5} Trim a 4cm diameter circle of pink circles fabric for the nose. Hand sew a gathering stitch 0.6cm inside the circumference. Start to pull up the gathers. Finger press the seam allowance to the inside. Put a little toy stuffing in the nose and pull up the gathers tightly. Sew the nose to the tip of the dog's head.

{6} Cut four pairs of legs from pink birds fabric. Stitch the legs together in pairs, leaving a gap on the straight edge to turn through. Snip the curves. Finger press the seams open. Turn the legs right side out and stuff firmly. Slipstitch the gap closed.

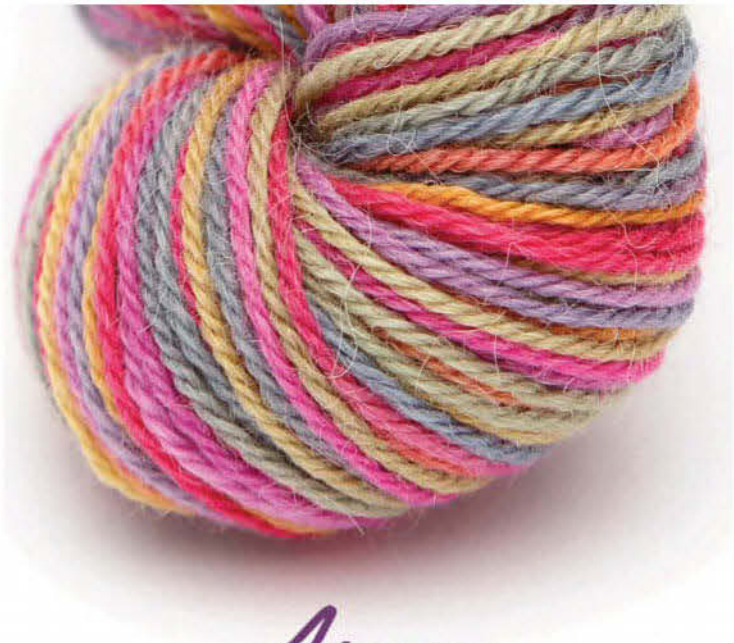
{7} Thread a long needle with a double length of sewing thread. Sew a button to one leg at the cross. With the leg facing forward, insert the needle through the leg, through one cross on the body, out through the cross on the other side of the body and through another leg, facing forward at the cross. Thread on a button and pull the thread. Insert the needle back through the button, leg, body, leg and out through the first button. Repeat to secure the legs to the body. Attach the other pair of legs, facing forward in the same way.



BONUS MAKES

See how you can make coasters, trivets and a fabric tub using your gifts at **homemakermagazine.co.uk**





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WEEKEND WONDER

PATCHWORK A PRETTY FOOTSTOOL

Make a stylish ottoman with coordinating fabric

Coming home and being able to put our feet up is one of the little luxuries that we love to look forward to after a long day at work, along with a nibble of dark chocolate and an episode of *Call the Midwife*. So this project is a welcome one, bringing both comfort and style to your living room and nailing the patchwork trend all at the same time. We've used a nine square design with four coordinating Makower fabrics, but this is a great chance for you to get creative with colours or use up any leftovers in your sewing stash.

YOU'LL NEED:
Square fabric stool
Four metres of Makower fabrics from belovedfabrics.co.uk
Wadding
Button covering tool and buttons
Curved upholstery needle
Strong thread
Ruler, pencil, scissors and pins
Sewing machine and thread
Staple gun

DIMENSIONS: Approx 40cm cubed



{1} Draw a grid of 16cm squares onto the back of one of the fabrics. Layer the other fabrics underneath and pin together. Cut out 13 16cm squares. The four sides of the stool have a different fabric on each side and the top is made up using a combination of the four fabrics.

{2} Stitch the squares together to make a strip. You can work horizontally or vertically taking three squares at a time and stitching them together with a 1cm seam allowance.

{3} Press the seam allowances open on the three strips and stitch the three together, again with a 1cm seam allowance, being careful to match the corners of the squares together. Press the seam allowances open and you have one completed square. Repeat the process using another nine squares in different fabric,then stitch the nine squares together to make one piece.

{4} When the four sides have been completed, make the patchwork top. Choose your combination of fabrics and stitch them together in your chosen design as before.

{5} Cut out five squares of wadding to the same dimensions as the patchwork squares. Lay two prepared squares together with the right sides facing. Place a piece of wadding under and on top of the patchwork squares. Pin all the layers together and then stitch one of the edges together with a 1cm seam allowance. Attach another patchwork square and wadding to the edge of the first. Attach the remaining two side squares and wadding, attaching the edges of the first and last square together to complete the sides of the cover for the stool.

{6} Attach the top square; stitch just the patchwork square to the four top edges of the sides – this makes it easier to match the squares together and then attach the wadding. Turn the cover to the right side. Pull the completed cover over the stool and stretch and wrap around the edge onto the base of the stool. Staple the edges onto the underside.

{7} Cover five buttons in each of the four fabrics, following the manufacturer's instructions. Use a curved upholstery needle with strong thread to stitch into each corner of the centre square. The needle needs to catch the fabric of the original cover and then back out in the same place pulling the thread tightly to dent the new cover, making sure to knot off the thread securely. Repeat the process on the three remaining sides and the top. Stitch a button over each of the dented corners. Mix up the buttons on the top and four contrasting buttons to each of the sides.

{8} Cut a square of fabric the same size as the base of the stool. Press in 1cm around all four edges and then staple to the base to cover the raw edges of the patchwork cover.



Style Secrets

Other ways to add a touch of patchwork to your living room:

1. *Use sheets of scrapbook paper to create a patchwork style feature wall.*
2. *Stitch together pretty fabric triangles to make summery bunting.*
3. *Make a patchwork lampshade using hexagon pieces of fabric.*

OUR MAKER...
AMANDA WALKER

5 MINUTES WITH...



INGRID FROM BELOVED FABRICS ON HER LOVE OF HABERDASHERY

What first sparked your passion for all things fabric?
My grandmother bought me a sewing machine for my 13th birthday. At the time my other gran also worked for a lady who owned a clothing factory in the East End of London, so I was very lucky to have a continuous supply of free fabric remnants to chop up and experiment with. I have always been drawn to colour and patterns, not just in textiles but all types of mediums. After the arrival of my second child I rediscovered my love of sewing and fabric, and one thing led to another…

What are the best things about sewing your own home accessories?
For me it's the opportunity to mix fabric and trims, and produce something that is truly unique. And of course, you are no longer limited by the choice of home accessories available on the high street.

What advice would you give to a beginner stitcher?
Mistakes can always be unpicked!

What are your three golden rules when it comes to sewing cushions?
Splash out a bit and buy something special for the front of the cushion, and balance this by using a less expensive fabric for the back. I prefer to make my cushion covers slightly smaller than the cushion inner so that I end up with a nice plump cushion, therefore I always cut my fabric to the same dimensions as the cushion inner. Finish the raw edges of your cushion with a zigzag stitch to prevent them fraying.

For more visit **belovedfabrics.co.uk**

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ELLA JOHNSTON, EDITOR

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- Learn how to weave with wool.
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- Assorted Bazzill card
- White picture frame (14cm x 19 cm approx)
- Assorted adhesive gems
- Glitter spray

EASY UPDATE

Die-cut a dainty butterfly display

For those of us that don't have the steadiest of hands, intricate designs tend to be something of a struggle. But what if we told you that there was a way to create this pretty decorative piece without having to deal with any fiddly bits and pieces? Use a Sizzix die-cutting machine to cut out perfect butterfly shapes and spruce up a plain white frame.

HEAD TO SIZZIX.CO.UK TO FIND THESE PRETTY BUTTERFLY DIES



{1} Die-cut a pink ornate butterfly and a pale green plain butterfly from the same set.

{2} Lightly curl the wings of the pink butterfly and decorate down the length of the body using assorted adhesive pearls.

{3} Add a light dusting of glitter spray and matt the two butterflies together.

{4} Create a further two butterflies using the technique above in contrasting colours and mount all the assembled butterflies directly onto the glass of the white frame.

DONE IN A DAY

USE A CLASSIC DESIGN TO REVAMP AN OLD BOOKCASE

TRANSFORM TIRED SHELVES WITH A COVERING OF FABRIC

We've all got a tired old shelving unit hanging about in our homes serving a purpose but hardly rocking our world. Give this sad old item a new leash of life by covering with a stand-out print. We're big fans of mid-cenutry modern illustration so we've used iconic Charley Harper bird images to revamp our shelves. We think these designs make great statement peice for a hallway or kid's room. We've lined the backing panel with a clashing print and the shelves with a slightly more sober design but you could just as easily wrap the whole unit using just two metres of one fabric. And you don't have to be as bold as us – just imagine your shelves lined in Liberty print or ditzy florals in a bedroom or lounge. Spray adhesive makes light of this tricky-looking job, just make sure you have plenty of ventilation when using it.



SEE HOW TO MAKE THIS COLOURFUL BIRDIE PAPERWEIGHT ON THE HOMEMAKER WEBSITE

YOU'LL NEED:
Melamine shelving unit
Charley Harper fabrics from thevillagemaker.co.uk
Heavy duty spray adhesive
Duct tape
Screw driver and hammer
Ruler and pencil
Scissors

FABRIC-COVERED SHELVES

{1} Take apart the shelving unit making sure that you keep all the screws and nails kept safe. Wash each element with warm soapy water and leave it to dry.

{2} Cover the backing panel with a bright contrasting fabric. If your bookcase's backing has sections, cut the fabric to the size of each section. Affix the material in place with heavy duty spray adhesive on the front of the panel with the fabric folded neatly over the back. If your pattern is directional make sure that the fabric designs on each section is in line with each other.

{3} Cover the shelves and the sides of the unit with the other design. To fix, spray the shelves with adhesive and the smooth the fabric over, pulling tightly to ensure a clean covering. The material should be cut to cover the top and bottom surface of the shelf with an added 2cm allowance. Fix the fabric on the tops of the shelves first and then wrap the material around onto the underside, securing raw edges at the back.

{4} When all the surfaces have been covered, use a bradawl to pierce through the fabric revealling any holes needed to reassemble the unit, and re-construct the shelves.

{5} Make sure that the raw edges of the fabric do not lift at the back by sticking duct tape along the back edges to seal.



OUR MAKER...
AMANDA WALKER

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Yoyogi Park Peeking in gold, Skinny La Minx, £3.50 per fat quarter

All fabrics from **thevillagemaker.co.uk**

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Both machines put you in control of your makes as the Silhouette Studio software allows you to create and cut your own designs and as well as use the fonts already installed on your computer. There are also tens of thousands of great designs available to you through the ever-growing Silhouette Online Store.

The Silhouette CAMEO, £269.99 has an optical eye that reads registration marks printed with your design and cuts precisely around an image. It's great for a range of home craft uses as Silhouette electronic cutting machines can cut a wide variety of materials including paper, vinyl, cardstock, fabric, heat transfer material and so much more.

The Silhouette Portrait, £125, is a smaller, lighter version of the Silhouette CAMEO electric cutting tool. Just ike a home printer, the machine plugs into your PC or Mac with a simple USB cable. Instead of printing it uses a small blade to cut up to eight inches by ten foot panels of paper, cardstock, vinyl and fabric. Good eh?

For more info visit **graphtecgb.co.uk**



Season's best WITH JULIE

Enjoy the summer with our favourite artisan **Julie Dodsworth**





Julie Dodsworth is an artisan British designer who works from her narrowboat *Calamity Jane* on the Grand Union Canal. England. She is known for her folky designs that take the heritage of the waterways with a beautiful romantic twist.

July provides a window of opportunity for me to retouch and repaint the exterior free standing fixtures of *Calamity Jane* while Simon gives the boat's engine a good run out. Choosing waterways with fewer locks means I can paint all day, hopefully in good weather, and get plenty done.

Every summer I repaint the gaily decorated window boxes and buckby (water carrying) cans. The elements corrode and fade my painting work to a devastating degree over time and only by keeping everything indoors would we be able to slow down the corrosion.

I reflected on the necessities of my labours only today as we found a shady mooring; dragon flies darted at my side and I set to work in the evening light, which is always so clear and very beautiful to paint by. Like all artisans this constant reworking and nurturing is essential, along with an acceptance that our work doesn't last forever.

A florist sees their flower work fade in days, the baker hopes their delicious bread will be devoured in hours and even the seamstress knows an amazing dress will eventually tire and fade.

For us homemakers, our art is to be used, worn or eaten and my boat boxes must go back on the roof to weather the storms and the blazing sun. Though I'd like to think I improve every year, perhaps that is what makes homemaking so special; it's the constant up-keep that inspires new ideas, teaches us new techniques and spurs us on to explore lovely new methods and techniques – moving us on creatively every season.

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UPCYCLE AN OLD DECKCHAIR

We love our deckchairs on the boat. They make lovely evening seats for us to relax in and fold away in the day when I need more space. Of course, they're great for a lazy afternoon in the sunshine too.

YOU'LL NEED:
An old deck chair
Staple gun
Fine glasspaper
Strong cotton fabric
Iron on hemming
Paint

{1} Rip off the old fabric so you are left with just the wooden frame and prepare for painting with a rub down using fine glasspaper.

{2} Paint to match your fabric. Fold your material in at least three times to strengthen the seat, and centre your seam down the back. Stick the seam with iron on hemming.

{3} Curl the fabric under the top rod of the deckchair and staple underneath, as tight as you can get it. Let the material fall in a 'deck chair manner' and staple under the bottom bar.

Julie's top tips...

- Use a special outdoor fabric for added practicality and hardiness.
- Sew up some matching scatter cushions. You could even attach these to the top of the chair with ribbon for the perfect comfy headrest.

A new dimension

Discover some creative ways with paper

If we are talking about the most under-valued and underestimated of materials out there, then paper has to be near the top of the list. In the last issue of *Homemaker* we looked into the art of papercutting, but there is also much more that can be done with this readily available substance. It can be manipulated with multiple techniques to create textural, and even three-dimensional, objects. Most people know how to make papier mâché forms, or have tried their hand at origami, but there are many other ways to transform a flat sheet into something functional. Makers such as Pia Wüstenberg have challenged our expectations of what can be created with something as unassuming as paper.



WE CHAT TO MAKER **PIA WÜSTENBERG** ABOUT HER SCULPTED PAPER OBJECTS

Background?

I think I have always been hands-on and creative. When I was six my granny taught me how to knit socks. And before that I used to paint and draw, or make things from flowers and other objects I had collected. I have always been very curious and enjoyed making by hand. Travelling the world allowed me to learn from a variety of craft makers and create work of my own. I like use familiar materials or processes in unexpected ways.

Paper?

It's such a versatile and everyday substance. I don't like wasting things, so I started using paper as it was left lying around my studio. Paper can be or do anything; it can be strong, delicate, straight or curved, folded, creased or pulped... the list goes on. Developing my particular technique of compressing paper, and then shaping on a wood lathe, was a complete fluke. I experimented with many different ways of working before this process started to materialise. I'd advise anyone wanting to learn about creating with paper to step away from their desk and get their hands dirty! Experimentation is sometimes the only way.

Function?

I consciously prefer creating objects with a function and purpose. I also think that within the small spaces we live in today, the added value of something having a practical purpose is very important. Although it's also true for me that both the aesthetic, and the process of making itself, are both as important as the end use of the product. Each item I make with paper is unique; to me this is a highly-valued characteristic. We are all individuals and I think it is important that objects reflect this idiosyncrasy.

Future?

I was invited to participate in the Heal's Modern Craft market earlier in the year, and I also work with them on other projects. My wish for the rest of the year is to create new work and find interesting craftspeople with which to collaborate. I am also forever trying to perfect the ever-present balancing act between work and life; when you follow a creative career the lines between the two can easily blur.

To find out more about Pia and her work visit **piadesign.eu**

















Explore three-dimensional weaving

DIY: newspaper basket

HOMEMAKER DESIGNER AMANDA WALKER GOES ENJOYS A BIT OF PAPERCRAFT THIS MONTH WITH A BASKET WOVEN FROM OLD NEWS SHEETS. ANY LARGE SHEETS OF THIN PAPER COULD BE USED, SO WHY NOT COLLECT USED WRAPPING PAPER SHEETS AND UTILISE THESE TO CREATE A COLOURFUL VERSION? THE STRUCTURE IS SURPRISINGLY SOLID DUE TO THE PAPER'S INTEGRAL STRENGTH WHEN ROLLED. IT MIGHT NOT BE WISE TO FILL WITH FLOWERS, BUT WE FOUND THIS FUNKY BASKET WAS THE PERFECT PLACE TO STASH SMALL BALLS OF YARN FROM A CURRENT CRAFTY PROJECT.

YOU'LL NEED:
Newspaper
Small piece of cardboard
Wooden kebab skewer
Hot glue gun
Scissors
Stapler
Clothes pegs

1 There are a number of different methods for basket weaving; some have a woven base but this method starts with a solid version. Cut two discs of cardboard approximately 10cms in diameter (these can be larger or smaller depending on the size of basket you want to make).

2 Roll the newspaper tubes needed for the weaving. Cut strips of newspaper approximately 15cms wide and the full length of the paper. Use the wooden skewer to start rolling the paper from one corner on the diagonal. The skewer helps to produce an even roll. When the whole piece has been rolled, use a hot glue gun to secure the end. Make yourself a pile of these paper tubes.

3 This basket had 24 upright tubes, these are the 'struts' that the weaving is created around. The tubes are approximately 30cms long; again this length depends on the size of basket being produced (if you want a shallower basket reduce this length). The 24 paper tubes are then laid out evenly around one of the cardboard discs in a star shape and glued in place. The remaining disc is then stuck on top, sandwiching the ends of the tubes inside. Staple the two discs together to ensure that the these are attached securely.

4 The paper tubes should point upwards. Take each tube and bending it in a clockwise direction. Wrap it around the next one and bend it upwards. Take the tube that has been wrapped around, bend it over and around the next and so on making sure that you are wrapping the tubes evenly in the same direction. The last tube is wrapped by slightly loosening the first loop and threading it through and upwards to create the last upright.

5 To weave, bend one of the extra paper tubes in half and place it around the base of one of the upright struts, cross over the two ends of the tube on the other side, between this strut and the next upright. Repeat this process, working in a figure of eight motion around the upright tubes. Make sure that the tubes are always crossed right over left. As you reach the ends of that tube, two more can be connected to the two ends of the original by placing a little dot of glue on the end and slotting in a new one.

6 When you have achieved the desired height to the basket,with approximately 4cms of the uprights still visible, slot the ends of the weaving tubes down in front of an upright.

7 To complete the basket top, bend an upright over and insert the end beside the next upright tube, down into weaving. Repeat this process until all the uprights have been threaded. Trim away any uneven ends and use a dot of glue if any ends need to be secured.

8 Cut two newspaper discs the same size as the cardboard at the base and stick these to the inside and outside of the base to cover the staples and create a clean finish.



Tip: Clothes pegs are useful to keep the first row of weaving in place as you work. As the weaving becomes deeper it is easier to manipulate the paper tubes into position


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Make a gorgeous frilled cover



Create covered cork boards



Stitch a pretty apron

PLUS:

- ☆ Crochet a baby blanket
- ☆ Sew an owl cushion
- ☆ Whip up striped coasters

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The Further Adventures of CAKE BOY

Eric Lanland talks us through taking our beloved bakes into the open air



Whether you're heading to a festival, have a garden party coming up or are simply planning to make the most of the great outdoors this summer, food is sure to play a big part in your plans. Long gone are the days when picnic snacks consisted of squashed ham sandwiches and barbecues offered only sorry looking sausages – with so many trendy ranges of disposable plates and cutlery and utensil kits available, you have everything you need to create some delicious homemade treats in your back garden or pack up and take to your outdoors destination.

HOT STUFF

When it comes to barbecue food, I stand by the opinion that the humble tart is a great option. You can have them savoury or sweet, they taste nice hot or cold and you can get really creative with the fillings. Go for seasonal vegetables that will add taste and colour, such as roast pepper, courgette, and tomatoes of different shades and shapes. The British summer has only really begun when the first barbecue has been held and smoked meat is hugely popular at the moment. I really enjoy experimenting with the different flavoured wood chips available to create tasty new combinations. And it's not just meat that the barbecue comes in handy for, try toasting apricot with brown sugar or mixed berries in foil pouches to make compotes to top your ice cream sundaes. While you've got the ice cream out, why not make your own milkshakes? Add a shot of Baileys or Creme de Menthe for a grown up twist.

GETTING FRUITY

Seasonal fruit is the obvious choice when it comes to summertime treats and one of my favourite recipes is a sweet wine fruit jelly. This is really simple to make; line a loaf tin with cling film, pour in the jelly mixture with the wine and leave it to set, then add a layer of raspberries and repeat. Once finished, slice through it like a terrine and garnish with a sprig of mint –a dessert paté if you will! You can indulge in some delicious fruity mocktails too, try a mixture of cloudy apple, lemon and passionfruit juice, with some vanilla bean paste for sweetness and grenadine for colour. Of course, we can't forget strawberries, which are perfect for topping cheesecakes or being blitzed into a frosting for some dreamy strawberry and cream cupcakes. They are perfect for tarts too, and the one featured opposite is my summertime favourite!

For more delicious recipes, visit Eric's YouTube Channel at youtube.com/user/ericlanlard and discover his latest baking tips and tricks. Now see Eric at The Cake and Bake Show in Harrogate, London, Manchester and Edinburgh!

WHITE CHOCOLATE STRAWBERRY TARTS MAKES 6



For the pastry:
300g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
4 tbsp golden caster sugar
200g unsalted butter, chopped into pieces
2 egg yolks
2 tbsp cold water
2 tsp vanilla paste or extract

For the compote:
50g golden caster sugar
200g strawberries, hulled and finely chopped
1 tsp vanilla extract

For the Chantilly cream:
100g white chocolate, roughly chopped
250ml whipping cream

150g strawberries, hulled and halved, for decoration

1. First, make the pastry. Sift the flour into a large mixing bowl and stir in the sugar. Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Make a well in the centre and add the rest of the ingredients. Using your fingertips mix together to make a smooth dough. Turn out onto a floured surface and gather together into a ball. Cover with clingfilm and chill for at least 30 minutes before using.
2. Lightly grease 6cm x 10cm diameter individual tart tins. Roll out the pastry and use it to line the tins. Prick the base of each pastry case, then chill in the refrigerator for 15 minutes.
3. Line each pastry case with baking paper and fill with baking beans. Bake in a preheated oven, 180°C (fan 160°C) for 8–10 minutes, or until the cases are just set, then remove the paper and beans and cook empty for a further 4–5 minutes, or until the bases are dry and crisp. Remove from the tins once cool.
4. To make the compote, put the sugar and chopped strawberries into a saucepan and cook over a medium heat until the fruits turn to a thick juice, then stir in the vanilla. Leave to cool.
5. To make the Chantilly cream, melt the white chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water, making sure the surface of the water does not touch the bowl. Leave to cool for a few minutes. Meanwhile, whip the cream to soft peaks, then fold one-quarter into the cooled chocolate. Fold in the remaining cream without over-mixing.
6. To assemble the tarts, spoon some compote on to the bottom of each pastry case and spread with the Chantilly cream, then top with the halved strawberries.

Sugarcraft Success: Buttercream flowers

Buttercream blooms

Wow your friends with perfectly piped petals



We all know buttercream as the delicious covering for our bakes, but why not take the icing to the next level and have a go at piping some pretty floral decorations? Whether the classic rose is your favourite, or you want to recreate a meadow of sunny buttercups, you can achieve amazing results by simply using the right tools to layer up your buttercream. Here we show you how to make the well-loved sunflower, perfect for the season and stunning at garden parties.

PIPE YOUR FLOWERS

buttercream sunflower

YOU'LL NEED:

Colouring for the petals; Sugarflair in Melon mixed with a hint of Autumn Leaf
Colouring for the centre; Sugarflair in Dark Brown
Wilton leaf nozzle 352
Piping bags

{1} Pipe a guide circle. Then, using the nozzle held at a 20 to 30 degree angle with one of the points touching, pipe a leaf technique petal in yellow.
{2} Repeat the same process to pipe a series of petals around the guide circle.
{3} Pipe another layer of petals at a slightly steeper angle than the first, about 30 to 40 degrees, and make sure that they are close to the first layer to avoid gaps. Pipe the second layer of petals in between those of the first.
{4} Finally, using brown buttercream in a piping bag with a small hole at the tip, pipe little dots in the centre of the flower.

buttercream chrysanthemum

YOU'LL NEED:

Colouring for the petals; Sugarflair in Claret
Colouring for the centre; Sugarflair in Dark Claret and Melon mixed with Autumn Leaf
Wilton nozzle 81
Piping bags

{1} Pipe a guide circle and position the nozzle at a 20 to 30 degree angle with the curved end down, touching your circle. Pipe a layer of pulled petals of about 0.5cm long.
{2} Repeat for two or more layers of petals, making sure they are close to the first, and that the length decreases but the angle is steeper.
{3} Using dark pink buttercream and a piping bag with a small hole at the tip, pipe short spikes around the centre.
{4} Repeat, using the yellow buttercream, in the very centre of the flower.
{5} When the buttercream of the petals has crusted, use a cocktail stick to smooth the edge of each.

Follow our step by steps for this flower at homemakermagazine.co.uk









SUGARCRAFT DISPLAY

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£48, occa-home.co.uk





£18.99, creative-tops.com



These flowers would look lovely on top of a plain frosted cake

Learn to make all your other favourite blooms with *100 Buttercream Flowers* by Valeri Valeriano and Christina Ong (FW Media International, David and Charles, £16.99)

Head to **lisafaulkner.co.uk** for some scrumptious baking videos



Home-baked nostalgia

Make some afternoon treats with **Lisa Faulkner**



Many people first became familiar with Lisa Faulkner through their TV sets; as an actress she enjoyed successful stints on *Brookside* and *Holby City*, and these performances made her a national favourite. More recently though, Lisa's public profile has been increasingly associated with cooking. A winning turn on *Celebrity Masterchef* changed her life and turned a hobby into an additional career. *Tea and Cake* is her third book, and in a change from her previous two titles focuses almost entirely on *Homemaker's* favourite aspect of cooking – baking of course!

AT HOME

Although Lisa says baking is something that makes her feel at home, she admits, "it's funny to say it, but I didn't used to consider myself a baker – I still don't, really! I make cakes and biscuits and little pies several times a week, but it's really so I have something to eat with a cup of tea." The idea for the book stemmed from this feeling of home and the rituals and associations around having a cup of tea; whether alone, with a close friend, or surrounded by the whole family. Recipes from *Tea and Cake* evoke that cosy feeling of home-baked goodies on the kitchen table, with a pot of hot Earl Grey just waiting to be poured. Lisa places emphasis on the love put into the bakes, and the fun had making them rather than chasing a perfect end result."You don't need to worry about everything turning out perfectly – it's not about making the lightest pastry or the crumbliest scone. What it's really about is taking the time to make something for someone – the simple gesture of pouring out a cup of tea and placing a plate of homemade biscuits alongside can make them feel loved, cherished and reassured in an instant."

TIME TRAVEL

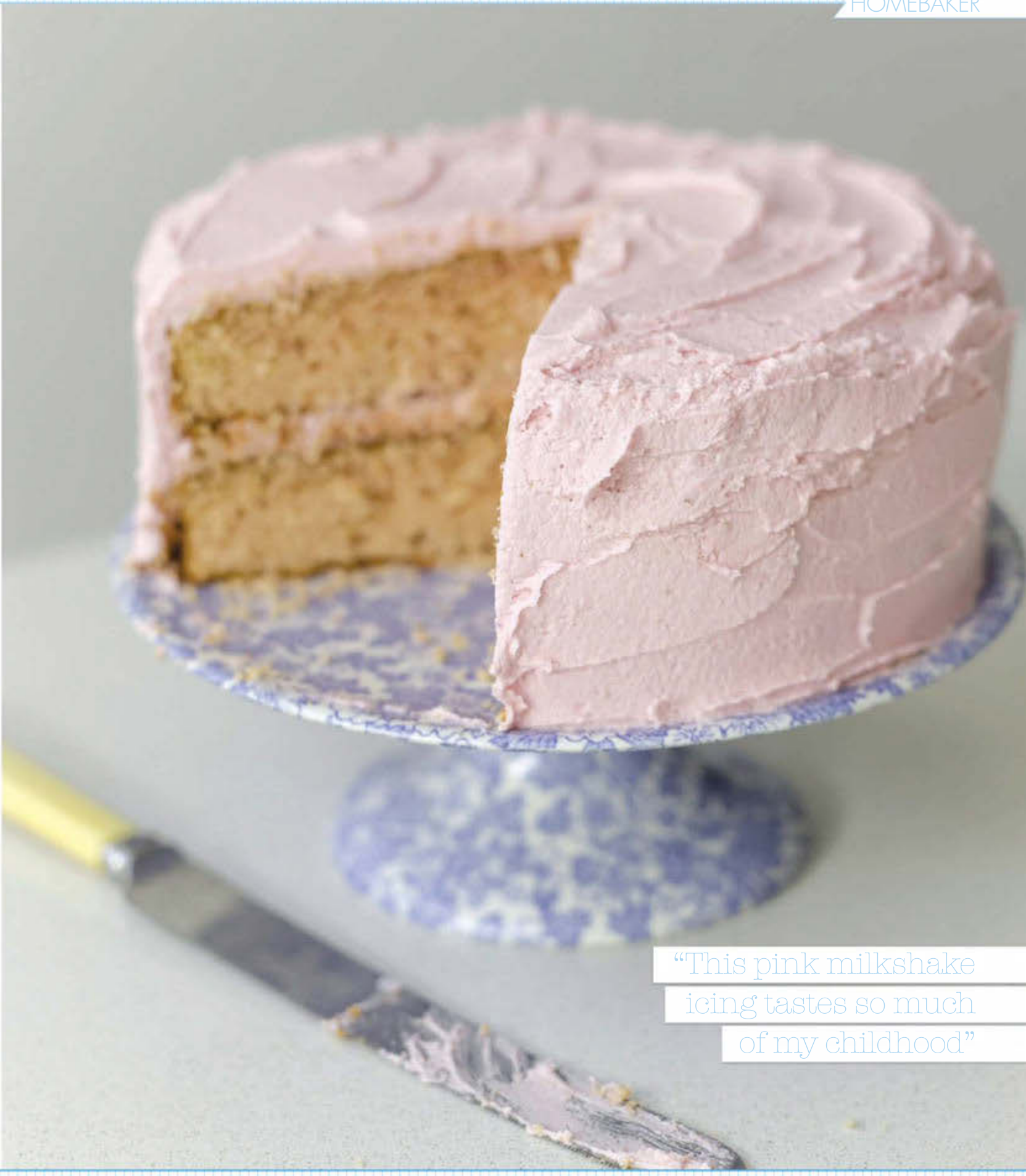
That feeling of nostalgia is intentional, as Lisa says she took a "trip back in time" to write these new recipes. She loves to spend afternoons cooking with her daughter Billie, and believes something as simple as baking a cake with someone special can create "lifelong memories". This is what she aims to pass on through these recipes. Lisa stresses she wants this book to be used, not just read, and should "sit on your kitchen shelf, a little battered around the edges and covered in butter icing and a load of chocolate finger prints". So have fun baking these simple fruity treats today, and create some special memories of

STRAWBERRY MILKCAKE SERVES 6-8

FOR THE CAKE:
300g butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
300g strawberry milkshake powder
4 eggs
300g self-raising flour
4 tbsps milk
Pink or red food colouring

FOR THE ICING:
300g butter, softened
500g icing sugar
Pink or red food colouring
150g strawberry milkshake powder
50ml milk

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C and grease and line two 20cm cake tins with greaseproof paper.
2. Cream the butter and strawberry powder together until pink and fluffy. Add the eggs one by one, alternating with a spoonful of flour, then add the remaining flour, milk and as much pink or red food colouring as you need to create a delicious pink batter.
3. Divide the mixture between the cake tins and bake in the preheated oven for 30-40 minutes until a skewer inserted into the centre comes away clean. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes then turn on to wire rack to cool completely.
4. To make the icing, cream the butter and icing sugar together with an electric hand whisk until light and fluffy, then add enough colouring to turn it pink. Mix the strawberry milk powder with the milk and add to the icing. There should be enough to sandwich the cakes together and cover the outside.



"This pink milkshake icing tastes so much of my childhood"

LEMON MERINGUE COOKIES – MAKES 12

Pretty, tasty and perfect for a tea party, these biscuits are a real winner! They are also very easy to make and great served as a pud. Why not try making your own lemon curd too?

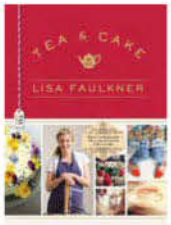
FOR THE BISCUITS:
250g plain flour
100g rice flour
250g salted butter, softened
75g golden caster sugar
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
1 egg yolk

FOR THE FILLING:
200ml double cream
3 tbsps lemon curd
4 meringue shells, crushed

{1} Sift the flours into a pile on a clean work surface. Make a well in the centre and add the butter, sugar, lemon zest and egg yolk. Gradually work in the flour using your fingertips until the mixture comes together to form a soft dough. Wrap in cling film and chill for 30 minutes until firm. Preheat the oven to 150°C and line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper.

{2} Dust the work surface with a little flour and roll out the dough to a thickness of 0.5cm. Cut into discs with a 6cm round cutter and place on the prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate for 30 minutes until firm. Bake the biscuits for about 30 minutes until a pale golden colour, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.

{3} Meanwhile, whisk the cream to soft peaks then fold through the lemon curd and crushed meringue. Spoon the mixture onto half of the biscuits then sandwich with the remaining plain biscuits. You can use a doily as a template and sprinkle over some icing sugar to create a decorative effect .



Find more goodies in *Tea and Cake* by Lisa Faulkner (£20, Simon & Schuster), which includes savoury recipes as well as abundant sweet treats!

"What it's really about is taking the time to make something for someone"



TEA PARTY

By now I'm sure you're aware that this year marks the 150th anniversary of childhood classic *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. To celebrate all things Alice-related, Sophie Allport has launched a brand new collection graced with wonderfully cute prints. Treat your family to a new tea set, or accessorise with some pretty textiles. All the china is hand-decorated and finished in Stoke-on-Trent, and starts at £6.50 for a teacup. **sophieallport.com**

Reader tip...



Alex says: "The kids love making a mess pouring icing onto lemon drizzle cake and they revel in being allowed to prepare strawberries for batches of fruity cupcakes."



ACE DISPLAY

Give your kid's cake pride of place on this retro cake stand, and then relax in the knowledge it's made of acrylic, not glass! £34.95, **fig1.co.uk**

BAKERS' BOUTIQUE

Chase off summer holiday boredom with some kiddy kitchen fun



Dress up

Look adorable in matching outfits with these practical, yet gloriously pretty, mother and daughter aprons. Child size, £13; adult size, £20, **raggedrose.com**



Tea for two

Get double the value with these sweet silicone teacups – bake cakes inside and then serve straight up for afternoon tea! £8 for set of two, **ellajames.co.uk**

TOOT-TOOT

Every kid loves trains so what could be better than this silicone mould for making a little one's birthday super special. £6.99, **dunelm-mill.com**



SWEET TWEET

Cupcakes are a classic to whip up with the kids. Instead of just smothering in sugar-laden icing, why not use this kit to make bakes party-worthy? £7.50 (for 24-piece set), **stylishparties.co.uk**





Cut some shapes

Why not make big flower cookies and use the smaller cutters with fondant icing to decorate. £6 (for 14-piece set), **ikea.com**

DONE IN A DAY

MAKE AN OVEN GLOVE AND POT HOLDER

SEW SOME QUILTED KITCHEN TEXTILES

Homemaker regular Lucy Pass shows us how to create both an oven glove and pot holder in the first of a trio of kitchen-themed makes. When you know the right materials to use, sewing up these practical pieces is actually pretty simple. Learn how to quilt with the special insulated wadding and before you know it you'll be cooking with gas! Lucy has used a contemporary combination of denim fabrics and printed cotton that would look equally at home in a sleek modern space or a rustic country kitchen. These two projects would also make lovely house-warming gifts, or the perfect present for a style-conscious baker – just pick cotton fabrics in their favourite hues.



YOU'LL NEED:
Insulating wadding from purple-stitches.com
Contrasting cotton fabrics from purple-stitches.com
Matching thread
Fabric shears
Tape measure
Tailor's chalk
Ruler
Pins
Iron
Sewing machine

OVEN GLOVE

{1} Cut your fabric. For the oven glove you'll need four 36cm x 23cm pieces of your chosen fabric (two inner and two outer), two pieces of insulated wadding the same size and one 7.5cm x 56cm strip of contrasting fabric.

{2} Take one piece of outer fabric and place it right side facing down. Layer on a piece of insulated lining, followed by a piece of inner fabric right side up. Use chalk and a ruler to draw a criss-cross diamond pattern over your fabric. Pin all the layers together so that the layers of fabric stay put while quilting.

{3} Following your chalk lines, start sewing from the centre of the fabric outwards towards the edge (this will stop your fabric puckering on the other side). Keep going until you've stitched over all of your lines. Repeat steps 2 and 3 to make the other side of your glove.

{4} Cut out the glove shape. Use an existing oven glove as a template leaving a seam allowance, or use your hand as a guide, roughly drawing an outline 4cm away from its edge (don't forget to include the thumb shape). Cut the shape from both pieces of quilted fabric and pin together, outer fabrics facing in.

{5} Sew the two pieces together, leaving around a 6mm seam allowance. On the 'thumb' side of your glove, leave around 1cm unsewn just before the opening. Trim your seams and clip around curves. Turn your glove right side out.

{6} Fold your 7.5cm x 56cm strip of contrasting fabric in half lengthwise and press. Then fold each long side in towards the centre fold and press again - this will form the band around the opening of your glove and encase the raw edges. Find the centre point of the contrasting strip and match it to the 'non thumb' side of your glove. Sandwich the edges inside the contrasting strip and pin all the way around the bottom of the glove.

{7} You should be left with two lengths of the contrasting strip on the same side as the opening left in step 5. Tuck each raw edge into the corresponding strip and pin in place. Continue to pin the strips closed to create two ribbons. Secure with a row of top stitching all the way around the bottom of the glove, continuing all the way to create ribbons. Tie the ribbons in a knot to finish.

POT HOLDER

{1} Take two pieces of fabric and one piece of insulated wadding measuring 23cm x 23cm and one strip of contrasting fabric measuring 8cm x 112cm. Take your two 23cm square pieces and one piece of wadding the same size, and follow steps 2 and 3 from the oven glove tutorial. Once you have a small quilted square, cut a small triangle off one of the corners (approximately 2cm).

{2} Take the 8cm x 112cm strip of contrasting fabric, fold in half lengthwise and press. Fold each long side in towards the centre fold and press again. Match the fold to the corner opposite the one you cut off in step 1.

{3} Sandwich the raw edges inside the contrasting strip and pin, working from the centre point, around the edges, stopping once you get to the cut off corner. At the other corners, tuck and pleat the strip on each side, as if wrapping a present, to create a crisp right angle.

{4} Sew everything in place, continuing along the contrasting strip to create ribbons. Tie the ribbons in a knot to finish.

Maker tip...



Lucy says: "When quilting on a sewing machine, the underneath will be the plusher, springier side of your quilt. Keep this in mind when you begin sewing and work with the right side down, regularly checking for puckering or tangled threads as you sew."

VIVIAN'S TOP TIPS



***Vivian Chan** of Purple Stitches gives us her top tips*

- Insulating wadding is a thin layer of polyester wadding that has been needle-punched with a metallic film. It's perfect for sewing projects that require thermal properties. Makes that immediately come into mind are 'hot' projects such as pot holders, oven mitts and tea cosies; but it can also be used in 'cold' projects such as lunch carriers or picnic bags (to keep food cool). If you are animal lover, thermal wadding can also be used to make self-warming pet bed.
- This material is only heat-resistant, and not heat-proof. So when making oven mitts and pot holders, you could add an extra layer of cotton wadding to enhance the heat resistant properties.
- This type of wadding is suitable for machine or hand quilting up to 18cm apart. Pre-washing is not recommended. After quilting, hand-wash the final product in cool water with mild detergent and dry flat.

DESIGNS WE LOVE



Retro Orchard Flurry Grape



Retro Orchard Tossed Apples



September Blue Gold Bud

All fabrics £3 per fat quarter from **purplestitches.com**







• AT WORK WITH •

KITTY MCCALL

The vibrant designs from brand Kitty McCall are pure wish-list material for any colour-lover. Everything from chairs to notebooks can be found wrapped in the label's signature bright prints. The name Kitty McCall originates from company creator Catherine Nice's grandmother; Kitty was her family nickname. The sole creative force behind Kitty McCall, Catherine started the business after leaving commercial studio work in 2010. "I wanted to have more control over how my designs were used and venture into new areas." Catherine takes in her surroundings and transforms details into beautiful designs in her uniquely colourful style. "At university I learnt to never stop absorbing ideas and to always try and pause for a moment and take in the world around me. It's amazing what inspiration you can miss when you're not paying attention to the every-day."

YOU'VE JUST WOKEN UP – WHAT TIME IS IT?

I wake up at 6.00am and make a cup of tea. A poached egg on toast is my staple breakfast.

YOUR FIRST DESTINATION?

I go to the nursery to drop off the kids then head back to the studio where I start to complete orders, deal with deliveries and shipments, and reply to customer emails. Some of my day is also spent planning events and working with both stockists and collaborators on upcoming launches.











QUICK FIRE

BEST PLACE FOR INSPIRATION?
I love going to art galleries.

FAVOURITE FOOD?
Italian – I once had an amazing meal at Antica Pesa in Rome.

BEST HOLIDAY?
A road trip down the Pacific Coast highway in America.

FAVOURITE FLOWER?
I adore tulips.

MOST-CLICKED WEBSITE?
Pinterest!



WHERE ARE YOU FOR MORNING BREAK?

I'm on my own in my studio, I have another cup of tea and a classic chocolate digestive. To keep inspired I might read about past and contemporary artists or different art movements.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS

I usually start out with an idea for a colour palette, which then drives the print design. I use my sketchbook to bring elements together, by doing this I can see which ideas stand out as worthy of further development. I've always been a huge fan of colour, it's one of the most important things in my work as it sparks my creativity and really helps me shape my plans for a finished piece. I'm a hoarder of magazines, fabric swatches and generally anything that can be of used to inspire a palette of new hues.

WHO DO YOU BOUNCE IDEAS OFF?

My husband, and if I don't agree with his opinion I take the time to revisit the designs in question and see them with fresh eyes. It means the design process might take a little longer but by doing this I can ensure I'm happy with every finished piece.

WHAT'S YOUR STUDIO LIKE?

I like to call my desk 'organised chaos' rather than messy! I currently work alone but my workload has tripled in the last year so I will soon be looking at hiring someone to help.

IT'S LUNCHTIME. WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

It's always something home-cooked. I'm especially a big fan of soups even in summer, my favourite is spicy lentil and carrot.

WHAT'S THE BEST AND WORST PART OF YOUR AFTERNOON?

The best part is reading emails from happy customers, and the worst part is dealing with an ever-present pile of admin! In the afternoon I also love listening to the afternoon play on BBC Radio 4.

WHEN DO YOU FINISH WORK?

Most often between 4-5pm. I relax later in the evening with a glass of wine and get the record player going.

AND SO TO BED...

It's always a late one! I am usually most creative in the evening, this is when I do a lot of my sketchbook work.

To find out more about Kitty McCall head to kittymccall.com

10 MINUTE MAKE

Create fabric covered FRIDGE MAGNETS

Give everyday tasks a designer touch with this easy project

Even the most mundane of messages can be given a lift when you add an element of crafty love to them. That's why we love Corinne Bradd's easy-peasy make; not only does it make great use of your fabric scraps but now we get excited when we have to write those little reminders as it gives us a fantastic excuse to show off these bright little buttons. They're also great for displaying our favourite postcards and pictures.

YOU'LL NEED:
Buttons
Quilt wadding
Patterned fabric
(we used Riley Blake Fancy Free from thehomemakery.co.uk)
Small magnets from stickytiger.co.uk
Double-sided tape
PVA glue

{1} Fix the curved side of a button to a scrap of quilt wadding with double sided tape and trim the wadding so it is 0.5cm larger than the button.

{2} Cut a circle of patterned fabric twice as wide as the button. Use a doubled length of thread to sew running stitch around the circumference around 0.3cm in from the edge.

{3} Place the button, wadding side down, in the centre of the face down fabric circle. Pull the thread to gather up the edges around the button. Keep pulling until the fabric fits snugly over the front of the button and secure the thread tightly.

{4} Squeeze a pea sized dab of thick pva type glue on the back of the button and place a small magnet on top. Do not push right down but allow the glue to rise up the edges of the magnet slightly. Leave to dry completely before using.





WRITE IT DOWN!

Our pick of memo pads and more



Brushstrokes notecard set, £13, **berryred.co.uk**



'What to Eat' meal planner pad, £6.29, **thegiftoasis.com**



Happy Jackson memo pad, £8, **hintonshome.com**



Floral monarch writing pad, £12.50, **notonthehighstreet.com**

Terence Conran with the V&A ballpoint pen, £13, **amara.com**



DECORATOR'S diary

Turn your child's room into a creative haven

1 Think long term. It's easy to be tempted to go all out with your child's favourite colour or book character when decorating their room, but consider the longevity of your theme. When it comes to paint choose base colours that are flexible and versatile, such as peach or turquoise. Add personality to the room with stuff you can change such as bedding and accessories. Invest in classic furniture that won't go out of style – it may be more expensive initially but in the long term this will save you constantly buying new pieces.

2 Utilise tricky spaces. It's rite of passage that the youngest child gets the smallest bedroom, which means that they are often unusual shapes with awkward nooks and crannies. Embrace these quirks by maximising their potential for storage or even creativity – paint a feature wall to make a blackboard or create a cosy reading cubby in a small corner with floating shelves and a scattering of squishy cushions.

3 Add playful touches. If we had our way, our little darling's room would feature a princess castle complete with turrets, a pirate ship bed and indoor rock climbing wall. But while those may remain Pinterest dreams, there are cool features you can create easily. Use Sharpies to draw on light bulbs that will throw shapes around the room and craft white tuille cloud-effect lampshades. It doesn't take much to create an inspiring space.

4 Declutter and upcycle. The first thing to do when redecorating is have a good clear out of what's already there, but that doesn't mean you have to throw everything out. Kids toys make for great upcycling projects and you can completely reinvent them to use again with your new décor. Use plastic animals for drawer handles, toy cars as terrariums and stick old pencils or discarded crayons onto a plain photo frame or mirror for a funky, colourful new look.

5 Stay safe and sound. Of course the most important thing to think about when decorating your child's room is their safety so be sure to remember a few basic rules; get rid of any protruding elements that could poke or trip your child, avoid hanging heavy pictures or mirrors above the bed, fix free-standing furniture to the walls, secure any dangling lamp cords and cover plug sockets.





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PROMOTION

Home Style Inspiration

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esse.com



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Visit **willowandhall.co.uk/homemaker** or call **0845 468 0577** to order free swatches or a catalogue.



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tuiss.co.uk



sofasofa

Save up to 25% in the SofaSofa summer sale. British manufacturer SofaSofa's latest range contains over 60 different sofa styles, with something to suit every taste and budget. There is a huge range of fabrics from which to choose, including wools, velvets and leathers. All products are handmade in the UK and come with a no-quibble 21 day money back guarantee. SofaSofa deliver anywhere on the UK mainland. To view the range visit **sofasofa.co.uk** or call **01495 244226** to get your copy of the SofaSofa catalogue.



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blinds-2go.co.uk









I ONLY SELL THINGS I LOVE

We talk shop with ceramicist **Victoria Turner**

If you've been to the East Sussex town of Lewes you may have noticed the gorgeous little store belonging to ceramicist Victoria Turner. Housing her own designs as well as a carefully curated selection of pieces from local makers and artisans, the shop and studio From Victoria is near impossible to walk past without stepping inside for a closer look.

Make and create

The shop and studio space is a relatively new development in Victoria's business. Her career began in homeware visual merchandising which has no doubt served her well during this latest venture. A little while after graduating, her first career became a part-time job as the ceramics business took over. More and more of Victoria's time was spent making, and she has been a practicing ceramicist now for more than 15 years. She has long-specialised in designing and making objects from porcelain in particular: "My first experience of working with clay was at college where we did lots of hand-building. At university I experimented a lot more with wheel-throwing and printing onto clay. I had designed a tealight holder and I was looking for a clay that had translucent properties and fired white. Porcelain was perfect as the whole piece glowed along with the candle. I became hooked and have loved working with it ever since."

Collect and draw

Victoria's sketchbook is bursting with ideas and doodles: flowers and seeds are collected and photographed for further inspiration. When a new design idea emerges, the next step is making a clay maquette that is used to build a plaster mould. The porcelain slip process is then initiated and the creative experimentation with colours, textures and finishes begins. Some of Victoria's designs are clearly influenced by vintage finds such as old glass bottles or antique lace; these objects are sourced and incorporated into the casting process. "My most popular designs are the planters with lace printed on the bottom and the mini bud vase. I am proud of all my work but the mini bud vase was one of my first designs and is still as popular today as it was over a decade ago. I like my pieces to have some kind of function and more importantly so do my customers."







Sell and teach

Victoria sources items for her shop with care and integrity, and this considered approach shines through in the collection of pieces on display. "I choose work by other makers that I think complements my own work and fits in with my aesthetic. I look for a certain quality in the workmanship and I only sell things I love." A chance stroll by the empty shop-front led to the spontaneous decision to fulfill a long-held dream: "I had always liked the idea of having a shop with a studio space but did not think it was something I could afford. I walked past a tiny store one day, within a beautiful old building full of independent businesses. It had a 'To Rent' sign and I immediately contacted the owners. Before I knew it, the space was mine!"

Alongside making her own pieces, Victoria uses her studio space to run classes in ceramics. "I started my first workshops last Christmas and they were instantly popular. The classes specialise in making decorative pieces and are suitable for anyone wanting to learn the basics of working with porcelain." Victoria has some sage advice for anyone overwhelmed with ideas and ambitions: "It is impossible to achieve everything at once. Someone once said to me 'little steps', and it stuck. Prioritise what you want to achieve and do one thing really well before you move on to the next." This year, developing her online shop is at the top of Victoria's 'to do' list. She adds: "Hopefully further down the line I'd like to have a bigger shop with a larger studio and more space for workshops." It looks like Victoria has a few more exciting steps still left to take.

Go to fromvictoria.co.uk for more information about Victoria and details of her workshops.





TURN OVER FOR VICTORIA'S COOL CLAY PROJECT



victoria's air-dry clay planters

YOU'LL NEED:
200g white air-dry clay
from stickytiger.co.uk
Rolling pin
Craft knife
Ruler
Round cookie cutter or plate
Pencil
Paint brush
Cloth
Lace

{1} To make the base, take a small bit of clay and roll out into a rough circle shape approx 5mm thick. Using a circular cookie cutter or plate, cut out a neat circle from this, discarding the excess. Make sure the size of the circle is large enough to fit your plant. Use a pencil to pierce a hole in the base.

{2} Make the sides by rolling a piece of clay into a ball, placing onto the cloth and rolling out to 5mm thickness in a rough rectangular shape. Place your lace onto the clay and use the rolling pin to press it into the surface. Peel away the lace to reveal your embossed pattern. Cut neat edges along the long sides of the rectangle using the knife (leave the ends uncut for the moment). Gently wrap your lace-printed rectangle around the circular base, you will need to cut off the excess until the two ends join neatly. Wet the ends of the strip using the paint brush and carefully stick together.

{3} Apply water to the edge of the circle base and bottom edge of the rectangle 'wrap' and join together (the water makes the clay sticky which helps adhere the base to the sides). At this point you can also use the craft knife to add small bits of wet clay, if needed, to help join the pieces together or fill holes.

{4} Leave to dry for 48 hours until hard. Make sure you carefully line the planters with plastic to create a water-tight layer before adding your plant.

Tip: Experiment with the air-dry clay first so you get used to working with the material. When using a rolling pin to flatten the clay, brush some talcum powder onto the rolling pin to stop the clay sticking.

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Knitted HOME

WITH NICKI TRENCH



NICKI TRENCH is a knitting designer and author who also runs workshops in knitting and crochet, sewing, and sugarcraft. **nickitrench.com**

Knitted heirloom blankets were traditionally passed on from one generation to another, but nowadays baby blankets are often shop-bought, or factory-sewn from fleece fabrics that aren't made to be passed down the generations. Thankfully, homemade is back in fashion and the yarn companies are coming up trumps by releasing soft natural yarns in yummy colours for us all to knit with.

I was delighted back in early May when Princess Charlotte made her first public appearance outside the hospital and we were treated to a vision of the new arrival wrapped in a fine Merino wool shawl and bonnet. These were given to the royal family as a gift from a British-run family business in Nottingham, who have a long-standing connection with the monarchy, having presented shawls to three generations of new-born Windsors.

When Prince George was born I was asked to go along to BBC's *You & Yours* on Radio 4 to comment on why knitted baby blankets were so popular. Of course, there's the obvious; practically speaking babies need to be kept warm, but there is something very special about wrapping a baby in something that has been lovingly handmade stitch by stitch.

My babies are now fully grown, but they still have their special blankets saved in a box in the attic, so every few years or so when they might accidentally come across it they have that lovely rush of comforting memories sweeping back.

When I was writing my latest knitting book: *Fair Isle & Nordic Knits*, I wanted to design an heirloom blanket. Fair Isle knitting can be time consuming so making something that would last was important. The blanket featured here is one of my favourite designs. It uses a natural soft Merino wool with a little bit of cashmere, produced by Debbie Bliss Yarns, that was a joy to work with.

If you're not familiar with Fair Isle and have basic knitting skills, then just go along to your nearest wool shop or search for online tutorials, choose a really soft yarn and knit the blanket in just one colour. Because it will be loved, used, admired and appreciated for many years to come it's worth the effort and love you will pour into it.

YOU'LL NEED:
Debbie Bliss Baby Cashmerino yarn:
Seven x 50 g balls of shade 012 Silver (pale gray) (MC)
Two x 50 g balls of shade 204 Baby Blue (pale blue)
One x 50 g ball each of shades 078 Lipstick (deep pink), 001 Primrose (yellow), 068 Peach, Melba (peach), 002 Apple (green), 006 Candy Pink (bright pink), 059 Mallard (dark blue), 034 Bright Red, 101 Ecru (off-white)

- US size 3 (3.25 mm) knitting needles
- Yarn sewing needle

FINISHED SIZE:
97.5cm x 90 cm

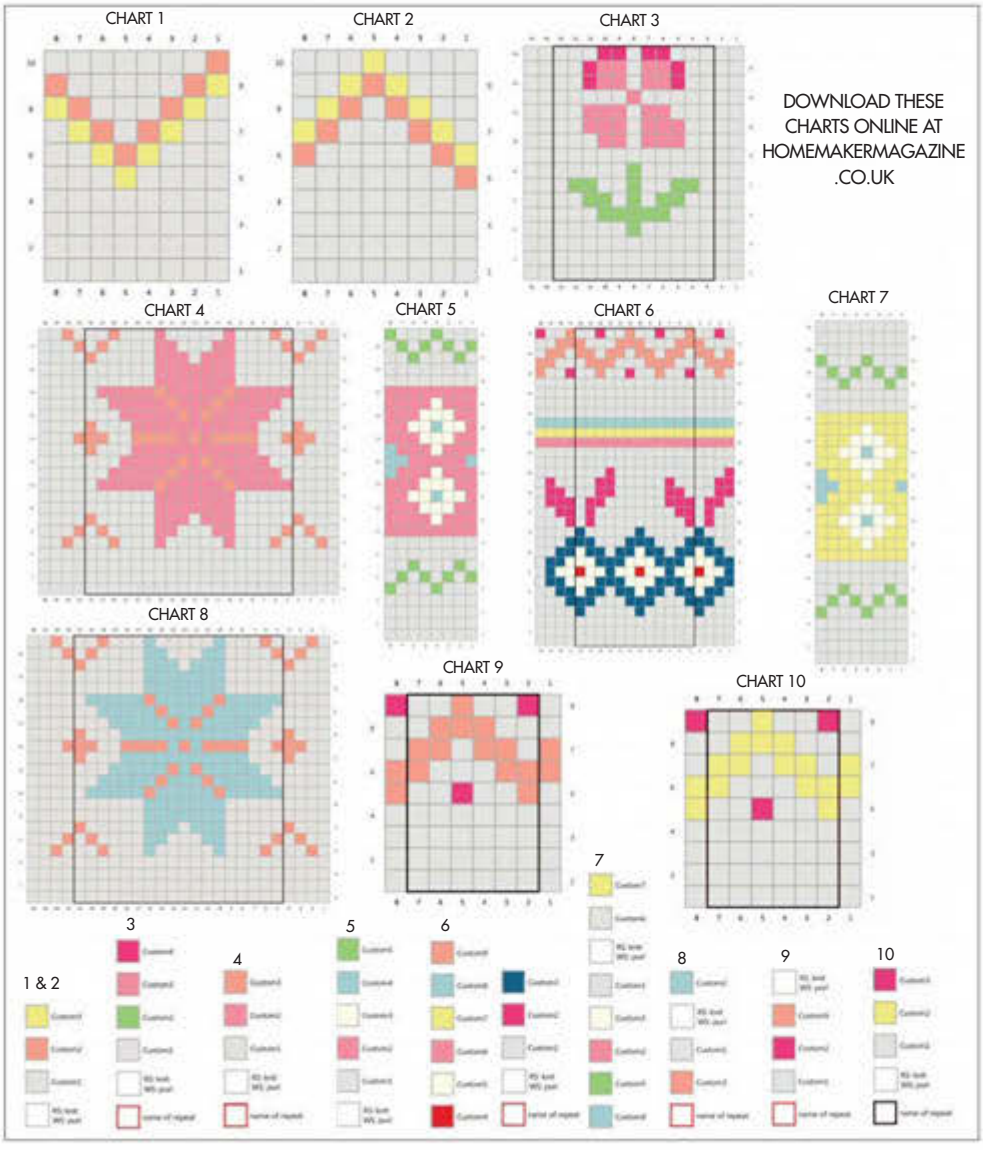
TENSION:
25 sts x 27 rows (10 cm) square working Fair Isle patt in st using US size 3 (3.25 mm) needles.

NOTES
Chart is read right to left on odd-numbered (RS) rows and left to right on even-numbered (WS) rows. Follow Charts 1–12.
Strand colours not in use loosely on WS of work.

Blanket

Using MC, cast on 244 sts.
Work in seed (moss) st for 14 rows.
Cont to work seed (moss) st for 10 sts each side of 224 sts of chart, working chart in st st between, creating seed (moss) st border.
Cont patt on charts 1–12 until work measures approx. 34 in. (86 cm).
Work in seed (moss) st for 14 rows.
Bind (cast) off.

FINISHING
Sew in ends.



USE A ROW COUNTER ON THE END OF YOUR NEEDLE TO KEEP TRACK OF WHERE YOU ARE IN THE PATTERN. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A ROW COUNTER, YOU CAN STRIKE OFF THE NUMBERS DOWN THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CHART AS YOU COMPLETE THE ROWS.



Pattern and photography taken from *Fair Isle & Nordic Knits* by Nicki Trench (£12.99, CICO books)

Yarn NEWS

Our round up of the latest trends, events and products in the wonderful world of wool



FIBRE-EAST

Lovers of British wool and fibre fanatics alike will be delighted to hear that Fibre-East is back on the 25th and 26th of July. Based in Ampthill, Bedfordshire, the event is a celebration of gorgeous home-grown wool and has more than 100 exhibitors attending from across the UK. With workshops in knitting, crochet, spinning, felting, weaving and more, yarn-lovers will certainly find a wealth of inspiration at this show. Visit **fibre-east.co.uk** for tickets and more information.

CRAFTY CLASSES

AUG 1 **Steeking with Debbie Tomkies**
Putting your scissors to your knits needn't be something that fills you with fear.
baaramewe.co.uk

AUG 11 **Fun with felt!**
Free to attend and no need to book, this is perfect for keeping the kids entertained.
getknitted.com

AUG 23 **Sock surgery**
Learn how to knit two socks at the same time from the toe-up!
yarn-on-the-square.co.uk

Find a great selection of crafty workshops over at unravelandunwind.co.uk!



RUNWAY REPORT

Nowadays, T-shirts, jumpers, sweaters and more are often adorned with symbols and patterns to add an individual twist to your finished outfit. In knitting, those with a little more experience in the craft can try their hand at intarsia to embellish their garments, which involves the use of bobbins or small balls of yarn for each area of colour. Why not employ this method on a knitted cushion or throw? Rowan designer Marie Wallin uses this technique to incorporate a bright and beautiful trio of flowers into this stylish summer knit, named Santorini (Rowan Knitting & Crochet Magazine 53).
knitrowan.com

4 OF THE BEST...

SOCK YARNS



Available in a selection of rich jewel-inspired shades, Rico Superba Poem is a multi-tonal yarn blending 75% wool with 25% nylon. £7.50 per 100g (420m) ball.



Self-striping yarns are a knitter's best friend as they do half the work for you. Zauberball from Schoppel Wolle has some great colourways! £9.50 per 100g (420m) ball.



The variegated colourways in Lang Yarns Jawoll Magic Degrade mean that your pair of socks will be totally unique! £9.75 per 100g (400m) ball.



Malabrigo Sock is spun from 100% superwash merino, making it delightfully soft and machine washable, too. £12.99 per 100g (402m) skein.

All of these yarns can be found at **socialfabrictotnes.co.uk**

Colourful and easy to make for crocheters of all abilities, the classic granny square is given a modern twist by Rosa P in her latest title, *Great New Ways with Granny Squares* (£7.99, Search Press). Featuring 20 stylish projects, including cushions, throws and more, each pattern is accompanied by both diagrams and step-by-step instructions, so you can choose which option you find easier. How about making some colourful floral bunting to decorate your home for summer? **searchpress.com**





Think bags are just for fashion? Think again – they are a homeware staple. Simply Stunning Crocheted Bags (£7.99, Search Press) contains 23 patterns for a variety of versatile and practical accessories, including this colourful striped laundry bag, just the thing for brightening up a dull, functional space. You can also crochet some cool gifts, as the book showcases plenty of fashionable totes and purse projects for you to try! **searchpress.com**

A PERSONAL TOUCH

Who said crochet hooks were boring? Not us! Artisan Hooklicious crafts a unique range of personalised, handmade crochet hooks, perfect for when you're trying to find an extra-special gift for fellow yarn-lover (or are looking to buy a little something for yourself). From seaside-themed creations to hooks designed to mimic wands from Harry Potter, you can even request a custom-order and design the crochet hook of your dreams! To see all of her quirky creations and order your own, visit **hooklicious.etsy.com**

CROCHET HANGING HEARTS

Spread a little handmade love with Lynne Rowe's stylish charms

With a simple floral motif, these cute and crafty homewares will fill any space with heavenly handmade charm. We love the way Lynne Rowe has used greys, greens and whites to give these charms a contemporary touch but try choosing your own shades to suit your the scheme of your rooms. Fill them with lavender to make an instant room freshener!



YOU'LL NEED:
Three balls of Rico Essentials Cotton DK, (A) 1 in shade White 80, (B) 1 in shade Pistachio 86, (C) 1 in shade Grey 25 from purplelindacrafts.co.uk
3.25mm hook
Toy filling

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS
Two heart hanger: 22cm long excluding hanger
Triple heart hanger: 22.5cm long excluding hanger
Single heart hanger: 12cm long excluding hanger

two heart hanger

LARGE HEART
FRONT

Using yarn A, make 4ch and join into a ring with a sl st. Work Rnd 1 into centre of ring.

❍ Rnd 1: 4ch (counts as 1tr, 1ch), *1tr into ring, 1ch; rep from * 6 times more. Join with a sl st into third of first 4ch. (8tr and 8 1-ch sp).

❍ Rnd 2: 1ch (not counted as a st), *into next 1-ch sp work (1dc, 1htr, 1tr, 1dtr, 1tr, 1htr, 1dc) (1 petal made); repeat from * 7 times more. Join with a sl st into first dc. (8 petals).

❍ Rnd 3: *3ch, miss next petal, 1sl st into sp between the dc of next 2 petals (push ch behind petal); repeat from * 7 times more. (8 petals with 3ch behind each petal).

Cut yarn and fasten off.

❍ Rnd 4: work this round over each of the 3ch behind each petal: Join yarn B with a sl st to any 3-ch sp, (1ch (not counted as a st), 1dc, 1htr, 1tr, 4dtr) into same 3-ch sp, (3dtr, 2tr) into next 3-ch sp, (1tr, 3htr) into next 3-ch sp, (2htr, 1tr, 1dtr, 1ch, 1dtr) into next 3-ch sp, (1dtr, 1ch, 1dtr, 1tr, 2htr) into next 3-ch sp, (3htr, 1tr) into next 3-ch sp, (2tr, 3dtr) into next 3-ch sp, (4dtr, 1tr, 1htr, 1dc) into next 3-ch sp. Sl st into first ch. (44 sts)

Cut yarn and fasten off.

❍ Rnd 5: Join yarn C with a sl st to last st of Rnd 4. 1ch (not counted as a st), 1dc into next st, 1htr into next st, 2tr into each of next 5 sts, 1tr into each of next 13 sts, 1tr into next ch, (1tr, 1dtr) into next st, 1ch, (1dtr, 1tr) into next st, 1tr into next ch, 1tr into each of next 13 sts, 2tr into each of next 5 sts, 1htr into next st, 1dc into next st, sl st into first 1ch. (57 sts)

Cut yarn and fasten off.

❍ Rnd 6: Join yarn A with a sl st to last st of Rnd 5. 1ch (not counted as a st), 1dc into each of next 2 sts, 1htr into next st, 2tr into each of next 10 sts, 1tr into each of next 14 sts, 2tr into next st, 1tr into next ch, 2tr into next st, 1tr into each of next 14 sts, 2tr into each of next 10 sts, 1htr into next st, 1dc into each of next 2 sts, sl st into first 1ch. (79 sts)

Cut yarn and fasten off. Weave in ends.

BACK

Work as given for Front, using yarn A throughout. Do not cut where instructed, continue using yarn A.

PICOT EDGING

Place hearts with WS together and RS outermost. With front heart facing, make a slipknot with same colour yarn as final round and place it on hook. Join with a sl st through both layers to the centre top, in between the two humps. Work the edging into the back loops only of the two corresponding stitches of each heart as follows and fill the joined pieces with toy filling as you crochet.

❍ (sl st into next st) twice, *3ch, 1sl st into third ch from hook, 1dc into each of next 2 sts, repeat from * to last 3 sts, 3ch, 1sl st into third ch from hook, 1dc in next st, sl st into each of last 2 sts. Sl st into first st.

❍ For hanger, make 40ch then sl st

back into st at base of ch.
Cut yarn and fasten off. Weave in ends.

SMALL HEART
FRONT
Work as given for Rnds 1-4 of Large heart.

BACK
Using yarn B throughout, work as given for Large heart Front, Rnds 1-4. Do not cut where instructed, continue using yarn B.

PICOT EDGING
❍ Work as given for large heart edging to last 2 sts, 3 ch, 1sl st into third ch from hook, 1dc in next st, 1sl st in last st
❍ Make 7 ch, sl st into point of large heart (into stitch behind picot edge).
❍ Sl st into the back of each st just made to strengthen the chain.
❍ Cut yarn and fasten off. Weave in ends.

triple heart hanger

Work 3 Small hearts following instructions above, using the following colours:

TOP HEART
yarn C for Rnds 1-3, yarn A for Rnd 4 and Back

CENTRE HEART
yarn B for Rnds 1-3, yarn C for Rnd 4 and Back

BOTTOM HEART
yarn A for Rnds 1-3, yarn B for Rnd 4 and Back

Note: When working the edgings, make the hanging loop on the Top Heart (as for Large Heart Edging), join the centre heart to the top heart (as for Small Heart Edging) then join the bottom heart to the centre heart (as for Small Heart Edging).

single large heart hanger

Follow all instructions for Large heart, using the following colours:

FRONT
Rnds 1-3: yarn C
Rnd 4: yarn A
Rnd 5: yarn B
Rnd 6: yarn C

BACK
All rnds: yarn C

EDGING
Yarn C



The perfect gathering

Editor Ella's quick-wins for a stylish summer party



I love getting everyone together in the summer. When I lived in a flat I'd organise gatherings in my local community park where homemade sangria, a portable barbecue and an impromptu game of rounders were a regular sunny-day fixture.

Now I have a garden, and my friends all have children, so our gatherings are less boisterous and normally involve entertaining toddlers and sipping non-alcoholic beverages (well most of the time). In my space I can make my parties look truly magical by embracing colour and ensuring that my guests feel truly treated. There's no bog-standard, bulk-buy plastic cups on my watch and every available space in my garden is decorated with a fun little items to add interest and make someone smile. Here are three of my fave ways to make sunshine celebrations special.







LET THERE BE LIGHT

When twilight hits, make sure your garden is bejewelled with colour and sparkle by decking ledges with lovely tealights displayed in colourful holders and hanging lots of vibrant LED lights on your fences and trellises. I love these multi-coloured flower string lights, £3.99 **therange.co.uk.** The flower shape design looks really sweet when lit in different hues and they are battery operated making them easy to hang outside. I also like to make magical twinkly lanterns by filling different sized glass jars with battery opperated LED white butterfly string lights, £3.99 **therange.co.uk** and placing them around paths and ledges.





SERVE COLOURFULLY!

Don't put boring bottles on the table. Decant your drinks into pretty Kilner drinks dispensers (main pic). Available in a range of cool colours, these beauties hold five litres and have an easy-to-use tap at the front that will pour your drink without splashing or mess, as well as a secure clip lid, keeping beverages fresh. Continue the Kilner theme by serving your liquid refreshments in clear-handled glass jars or giving soft drinks a colour pop with some bright green flower embossed tumblers. Kilner drinks dispenser, £14.99, Kilner clear-handled glass jars, £2.49, Luminarc funny flowers hi-ball tumbler in green £1.49, **therange.co.uk.**

HANG THAT BUNTING

A day time summer gathering isn't complete without bunting – it really sends out the message of celebration. I have lots of hand stitched designs that I display draped from from my shed and window ledges to create a warm, crafty feel for my get-togethers. I'd really recommend you get stitching and whip some up for yourself – it makes all the difference. Turn to page 21 for our embroidered bunting or check out our bunting projects at **homemakermagazine.co.uk**



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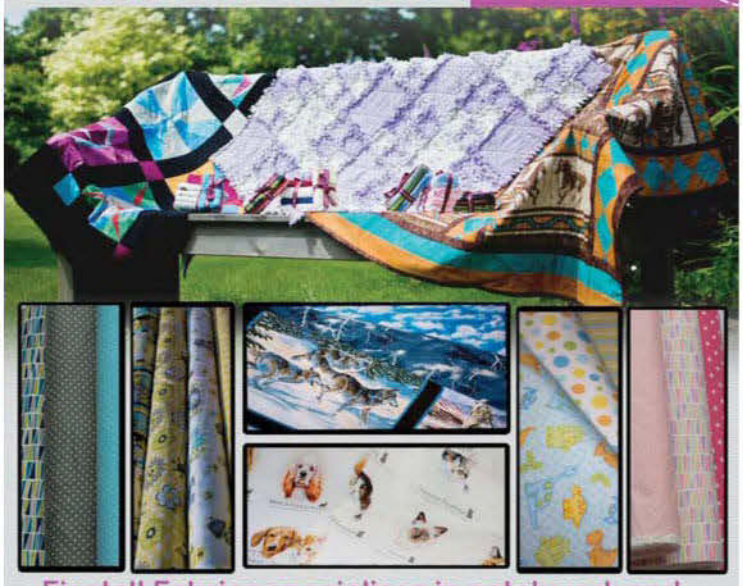
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PLANT perfect POTS

Experience the pleasure of gardening in even the smallest of spaces



At this time of year every garden-lover is filled with renewed inspiration in part thanks to all the amazing exhibitors at last month's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. You may feel that the designs at up-market events such as this are only aimed at those with five-acre estates, but with a little imagination and the right products any big idea can be modified for a super-small terrace, cute courtyard or bijou balcony.

Isabelle Palmer of The Balcony Gardener (thebalconygardener.com) shares some of the inspiration she garnered from the show and her own tips for incorporating plants into your life, even in the tiniest of outdoor spaces.



ISABELLE SHARES SOME GARDENING INSPIRATION

With my business, and passion for gardening in the smallest of spaces, I am always looking for inspiration. The recent RHS Chelsea Flower Show filled me with new ideas to incorporate into my own little balcony. When I'm looking for ways to create my own peaceful idyll in the heart of the city, I draw from a wide variety of creative sources. This year I have taken a particular interest in: a collection of old paintings, the latest catwalk fashion and even paint charts – the list is endless. I'm trying to create an outdoor space that I feel happy in. I want to pick colour and design elements that make me smile, and then translate these into the types of plants, flowers I pot and hues I incorporate. I feel fortunate that I have any kind of outdoor area, albeit small, as it still provides me with as much joy as I think a large garden would. Even if you only have a window box the feel of a garden can still be evoked.

MY FAVOURITE PLANTS

I tend to pick no more than three to four colours to keep things simple. This year I'm in love with pink, apricot, blue and white. My favourite plants at the moment include lupins, hydrangeas, poppies, hollyhocks, foxgloves and ceanothus. For scent I plant stocks and an abundance of violas and sweet peas. I also use grasses for texture. Not all of these botanicals tend to be associated with containers but they can work well in this environment. If you are new to gardening you can start out with some safer hardy plants such as ivy, skimmias, pansies and salvia.

BENEFITS OF A POTTED GARDEN

I love the sense of relaxation that gardening brings and the creativity it allows. At the end of the winter, apart from the evergreens, the window boxes are a blank canvas. It's wonderful to be able to create a new look every year by introducing new plants and rearranging containers.

There are a few things you need to bear in mind when designing your little green space. If you have a balcony that's several floors up it tends to be very windy, which most plants don't like. A trick I use is to stake all the plants, especially in my window boxes. This safeguards them from breaking and wind damage. Plants may also be in direct sunlight with not much shade, or the total opposite, so select plants suited to the environment of your space. The great thing about container gardening is you can approach it from a different manner than you would a normal garden. Plants can be moved around, re-potted, and they won't run riot – so there is much more flexibility. Your garden is portable so you can take it with you when you move, which is especially important if you are renting. There is nothing worse than having to leave all your hard work behind.



IMAGE © THE BALCONYGARDENER.COM

Isabelle's tips for creating a small garden oasis

1 It is essential to check with a structural engineer how much weight the roof or balcony or window box can take, if it's waterproof, and whether planning permission is needed for turning a flat roof into a terrace. Ideally, place heavy containers near load-bearing walls or over a load-bearing joist. Make sure window boxes are secure.

2 It's better to spend money on a couple of key items than on lots of small ones. Too many plants or ornaments can make a small space look overcrowded; pick containers in the same material or colour tone to keep the look streamlined. Always make sure they have drainage holes at the bottom so plants don't become water-logged.

3 Try to place pots in your sight line where they will be seen the most, such as right outside the kitchen window. If you have a balcony, use the patio doors as a frame for your design. Hanging baskets and vertical wall hangers are a great way to maximise space.

4 Remember to water daily as containers hold little soil and can dry out quickly. Use a topping such as purple slate to help maintain moisture levels; this also gives the potted plant a smart look. Consider containers with self-watering cavities.

5 Always deadhead flowering plants regularly to encourage new blooms. With fewer planters in a small space you want to maximise flower growth, so that each plant gives you maximum value and real visual impact.

6 If privacy is an issue add some screening plants such as bamboo or laurel to the edges of your balcony.

7 Add evergreen plants for a base colour year-round. Box hedges (Buxus sempervirens) and bay trees (Laurus nobilis) are my favourites. Always use perennials so they come back next year if you want a low maintenance and thrifty display; annuals will give you big blooms but they won't re-flower.

8 To create an alfresco dining area, use folding furniture such as a small bistro table and chairs. They are a great way to maximise your space as they can be packed away when not in use and stored easily in the winter.



QUICK GUIDE TO CONTAINER PLANTING

Cover the drain holes with a layer of stones so the soil doesn't clog them up, fill with soil mixture, and firm around plants, leaving at least 2.5cm at the top for watering. Cover with a stone topping. Water regularly, feed with a liquid fertilizer, and groom often to remove faded/dead flowers and leaves.

IMAGE © THE BALCONY GARDENER: CREATIVE IDEAS FOR SMALL SPACES BY ISABELLE PALMER (£14.99, CICO BOOKS)

DONE IN A DAY

BATHE IN STYLE WITH THIS EASY-SEW MAKE

GIVE PLAIN TOWELS A DESIGNER UPGRADE



GO TO BELOVEDFABRICS.CO.UK FOR MORE PRETTY DESIGNS

We love a posh hotel bathroom at Homemaker HQ, so we thought we'd give a new set of towels the five star treatment with this simple sew project. Homemaker regular Cheryl Owen's has used strips of our favourite fabrics to give these everyday items an elegant designer look. We think they'd look great all folded up in your guest room for special visitors to use as their own, they'll feel like proper VIPs.

YOU'LL NEED:
White hand towel
Cotton fabric: Makower, Flo's Garden, Butterflies Aqua Blue, Art Gallery Fabrics, Littlest Tenderness Grey, Benartex, Covent Garden Meadow, Wedgewood Blue all from belovedfabrics.co.uk
Coordinating sewing thread

{1} Most towels have a woven band just above the short edges. Cut two strips of fabric that are the length of the woven band plus 2cm x the width of the band plus 2cm. Press under 1cm on both long edges and on one end of the fabric strips.

{2} With right sides facing, pin one strip to the band on the towel, matching the pressed end to the edge of the towel and the long edges along the top and bottom edge of the band. Turn under the raw end of the other end of the band at the opposite edge of the towel. Slipstitch the ends of the fabric down. Machine-stitch close along both pressed edges of the fabric strip, and secure the other end with stitching.

Top tip:

If your towel doesn't have woven bands, cut two fabric strips the width of the towel plus 2cm, x 5.5cm. Follow the same steps apply the fabric strips 7.5cm above the short edges of the towel.



MORE IDEAS

- *Make matching wash bags, tissue pouches and fabric tubs lined with oilcloth to store toiletries. See* **sewmag.co.uk** *for a collection of free templates and instructions.*
- *Decoupage containers and drawer fronts with coordinating fabrics for a cohesive look, remembering to use strong PVA to protect them from water.*
- *Create a nautical theme in your bathroom by teaming red and white fabric with blue towels, or a light and girlie feel using soft florals and Liberty prints on towels in soft pastel shades.*

OUR MAKER...
CHERYL OWEN

5 ALTERNATIVE FABRICS



Trinket Light Blue, Riding Hood Story Collection, Blend. £3.50 per fat quarter, **purple-stitches.com**



Green Stripe quilting cotton, Sunshine Rose Collection, Tanya Whelan. £3.50 per fat quarter. **thehomemakery.co.uk**



Pink cotton, Birds in Flight Collection, Westex. £3 per fat quarter, **thevillagehaberdashery.co.uk**



Dandelion by Brie Harrison, Suffolk Garden Collection, Dashwood Studio. £3 per fat quarter, **thevillagehaberdashery.co.uk**



Liberty Tana Lawn in Pelagia. £14.95 per metre, **sewbox.co.uk**

LEARNING curve

From modern calligraphy to paper-pompom making, this month it's time to try something different



SCRUB UP

If you are one to always hunt out naturally derived cosmetics and cleansers, you'll want to hear about Chulo Naturals' soap-making workshops in Kent. An award-winning company specialising in natural skincare, they are keen to share their knowledge by offering a range of morning and all-day courses, for both kids and adults. Our pick would be learning how to make these gorgeous soaps. You will never be satisfied with cleaning your hands with an artificial-looking blue gel again. Kids' courses cost from £12, adults from £45; to book a course call **01634 814529** or visit **chulo-naturals.co.uk** and follow the link.



ALL IN ONE

When you're ready to tackle a brand new craft, what you need is everything ready to go all in one perfect package. Here at *Homemaker* we love kits for their ease, and the immediate satisfaction they provide of being able to get stuck right in. This set from Cath Kidston is designed as an introduction to the traditional technique of crochet. Everything you need to make a bright cushion is included, the yarn coming in a cheery Cath Kidston colour palette. The accompanying book contains instructions and diagrams for all the basic techniques you will need to master. Coming in a delightful and reusable floral-print tin, we couldn't think of a more perfect present to yourself. Purchase 'The Crochet Kit Book' for £20 from **deramores.com**



FLOWER POWER

Get your children away from the computer screen this summer and enrol them in some creative workshops instead. The Leicester Craft Centre runs a range of activities for crafty kids. On 11th July your brood could have a go at the art of paper-craft. You will be amazed at what they create as they proudly show off their achievements after class. The session costs £9, runs from 10am to 11.30am, and will introduce young creatives to decoupage and paper-flower making. Go to **leicestershirecraftcentre.co.uk** to book.



IMAGE©LAURAMCCLUSKEY.COM

STUNNING SCRIPT

Many old-world skills are coming back to the forefront of the art and craft world, and calligraphy seems to be the next 'of the moment' activity. In the capital, within the atmospheric interior of The Town Hall Hotel in Bethnal Green, Lamplighter London are holding a workshop providing tuition from its founder Chiara Lisa on 24th July. The day starts at 11am and runs until 1.45pm when a two-course lunch is served in the hotel's splendid Corner Room restaurant. The morning covers an introduction to shape, letter and style development. You will also be given a beginner's calligraphy kit to take away, so there's no excuse for not keeping up your newly-learnt penmanship skills. With all this taking place in a architectural landmark – what more inspiration do you need? The session costs £60, to book go to **lamplighterlondon.com**

PRETTY POMPOMS

This month in *Homemaker*, columnist Torie Jayne mentions how great paper pompoms are as an easy-fix when decorating for an outdoor event. These frivolous and fabulous creations may appear complicated to make but they are actually a total breeze. We've found an online video tutorial from the queens of all things party, Pearl and Earl, for how to make these fun decs. All you need is tissue paper in your chosen colours, and some baker's twine. Go to **youtube.com/pearlandearl** to learn how to make your own in minutes.





AT THE WHEEL

Pottery might have the film *Ghost* to thank for its romantic appeal, but there's no denying most of us love the idea of getting behind a potter's wheel and having a go. If you are from the north of our lovely country you are in luck – ceramicist Naomi Robinson offers one-to-one tuition on the wheel for £24 per hour; or in hand-building, £20 (a technique for forming a clay structure without any special equipment). Lessons are held in Naomi's home studio in Westhoughton, Bolton. Head to **naomirobinsonceramics.com** to book.

Course Directory

Still searching for a craft class to sink your teeth into? Here, Editor Ella has selected several which have her personal seal of approval.

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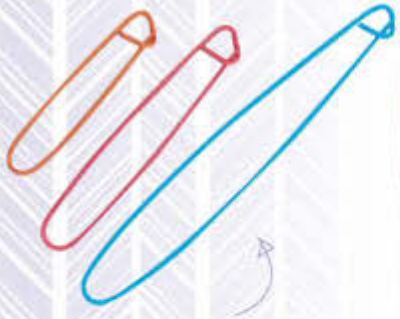


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Now for knitting

Love the wonder of wool and jump on the knitted bandwagon

Knitting has had a serious resurgence in the last decade or so, with everyone from royalty to celebs reaching for their needles. A great way to pass the time on a long journey, to create something special for a loved one or simply become part of a new, ever-growing community, knitting is one of the most worthwhile crafts to invest your time in. We've put together this guide for beginners, showing the basic tools you will need, stitches you can use, and plenty of tips from the experts.



Whenever you have stitches that at are not being worked slip them onto a stitch holder to fix them securely while you continue with a different section of knitting.



Reader tip...

Megan says: "I learnt to knit by arm knitting first. It's a great way to get started because you can see what you're doing before transferring the technique over to your needles."

WIN!

FIVE READERS WILL WIN A BOOK, A PAIR OF NEEDLES AND A BUNDLE OF YARN FROM **LOVEKNITTING.COM** – HEAD TO **HOMEMAKER MAGAZINE.CO.UK** TO ENTER!



From chunky arans to dainty lace weight, there are an incredible range of yarns for you to work with – check out some of our choices on the facing page. Always read the label as this will suggest the needle size you should be using.



When you're ready to take your knitting to the next level, there are plenty of books available to teach you the techniques behind various stitches and patterns.



Knitting needles come in a variety of lengths and thicknesses, depending on the yarn you're using. Generally, the thicker the yarn the thicker the needles you will need. These multi-coloured KnitPro Symfonie wood needles are both pretty and comfortable to use.

GET STARTED! CASTING ON

Casting on is the term used for when you make the first row of stitches on your knitting needle. No matter what you are making, the pattern will always start with the instruction to cast on a certain number of stitches.

STEP 1: With the slip knot on the left needle – counts as the first stitch – insert the right needle tip up into the stitch, crossing the left needle over the right needle.

STEP 2: With your right hand wrap the working end of the yarn – the end attached to the ball – round the back of the right needle in an anti-clockwise motion.

STEP 3: Catching the working yarn that has just been wound round the needle, bring the right needle tip underneath the loop on the left needle and to the front of the stitch.

STEP 4:
Pull the new loop further through. Insert the left needle tip up into the loop on the right needle. Slide the right needle out and pull the working end of the yarn to tighten. This counts as the second stitch.

STEP 5:
To make subsequent stitches, insert the right needle tip between the last two stitches on the left needle and not into the stitch. Wrap and pull the yarn through and place on the left needle as before.













Instructions from Knitting Smitten, Jessica Biscoe (£12.99, Quadrille)

TOP YARNS TO TRY



King Cole Cottonsoft DK
A great beginner yarn it is 100% cotton, beautifully soft and has lovely stitch definition. The delicate shades are ideal for summery makes



Debbie Bliss Baby Cashmerino
With its super-soft, luxurious cashmere-blend feel, neat stitch definition and enormous range of fabulous colours, it's easy to see why this yarn is enduring popular with knitters. Just wonderful for baby makes and an extra-special treat for grown-ups too.

To buy these yarns and others, visit loveknitting.com



Debbie Bliss Rialto DK
A hard-working yarn that comes in a wide range of shades to suit your home and fashion makes. It's made from finest Merino wool that has been cleverly spun to make it as soft as it could possibly be – gorgeous!



Louisa Harding Grace
This is for the knitter who likes to work with a bit of luxury. The Grace range combines the warmth and practicality of merino wool with the pure luxury of mulberry silk. One of Loveknitting's favourite knitting yarns.

EXPERT ADVICE



NATASCHA MOZLEY FROM LOVEKNITTING.COM GIVES US HER TOP TIPS AND ADVICE.

WHY KNITTING?

It's magic! Transforming balls of yarn into fabric is so exciting, wondering how a stitch will appear as you knit, or how colours will work together. Yarn manufacturers are producing miniature works of art in skeins of yarn, using exciting fibre blends and rainbows of shades –being able to create stunning, tactile knitwear from these yarns is something we knitters love!

KNITTING FOR THE HOME?

Knitted homeware is a wonderful way to adorn your living space. A blanket is a project loaded with love and time, perfect to wrap around your nearest and dearest, and cushions can be designed to match any interior. Knit dishcloths, flannels, dusters and cosies from cotton yarn and don't forget cosies for your cafetieres, teapots, mugs and boiled eggs.

BEGINNER ADVICE?

Start with chunky needles and yarn. It's easier to see your stitches with bigger yarn, and your project will grow quickly. Make your first project something that doesn't require shaping, such as a square cushion cover or a scarf, and practise your stitches as you go.

TOP TIPS FROM NATASCHA

- Knit a tension square to practise new stitches.
- Read the pattern: begin every project by reading the pattern all the way at least twice. This helps if you need to practise a new stitch, or think about how to knit each section.
- Take your time! Make sure you knit in a good light, especially if working with dark yarn. Don't knit when you're too tired; you'll be dropping stitches left, right and centre!

COUNTRY COTTAGE CHIC

Give your home a charming makeover this summer

With wooden beams, open hearths and vintage furniture, a country cottage really is the home of our dreams. If, like us, you're not lucky enough to own one yourself, never fear as we have found a whole host of ways to introduce the shabby chic look into your abode and make you feel like you're residing in the middle of the English countryside this summer.

The charm of a cottage comes from that lived-in feel, so go for faded hues when deciding on your colour palette. White mixed with muted yellows and greens will evoke country life, while pastels look pretty paired with rustic statement pieces of furniture. When decorating go for bare wood or use a chalk paint to create a textured look, or for a really weathered effect use several layers then chip some areas away. Remember that simplicity is essential – so pick a just couple of pieces to try this on.

Polka dots and ditsy florals are the key patterns in this trend and look striking when used sparingly. Stitch a spotty curtain or flowery apron, or mix the two with a patchwork throw for your sofa or bed. Antique-style wall clocks, wicker baskets and enamel jugs are all quick and easy ways to inject some country chic into your space without breaking the bank. Full of history and their own little quirks, no cottage is the same, which pretty much leaves this look open for you to interpret as you like – have fun!



John Lewis are on point with the country trend this season, combining neutrals, pretty blues and muted checks to create an inspiring living room space, complete with quirky cushions, **johnlewis.com**



Daydream about lush meadows with a delightfully summery cushion. £17.50, **cotswoldtrading.com**

No cottage kitchen is complete without a retro set of scales! £14.99, **creative-tops.com**





Add pastel touches to your décor, such as this stylish oversized enamel bread bin. £49, **ellajames.co.uk**

This classic blue and white floral dinnerware set will add a touch of elegance to your kitchen table. From £12, **houseoffraser.co.uk**



Lightly distressed and reminiscent of the country, this vintage looking shelf is perfect for holding collectibles or spice jars. £160, **ghify.com**





Fill your home with countryside critters in the shape of these cute illustrated mugs. From £14.50, **fenellasmith.com**



This small ceramic milk churn would look sweet on the breakfast table or used as a vase. £5.95, **dotcomgiftshop.com**

See the July issue of Sew for more country styling!



Keep your boudoir simple with wicker and lace textures and a hint of summery florals. From £10, **sainsburys.co.uk**

Get the look

☆ ***Decoupage a dresser with vintage floral papers and crochet lace doilies to protect surfaces.***

☆ ***Use offcuts of wood to make quirky floating shelves, perfect for holding ornaments and vases.***

☆ ***Make a feature wall of vintage plates from charity shops.***



Give your bathroom a classic country twist with blue and white patterns. Towel £10, bath mat £14, **next.com**

Q&As

Each issue we round up the best in the business to answer your homemaking woes, so if you've got a query you'd like help with, tell editorial assistant Frankie at francesca.cowling@aceville.co.uk



CHRISSIE HARPER IS THE OPERATIONS MANAGER AT CALIFORNIA SHUTTERS, **CALIFORNIASHUTTERS.CO.UK**, WHERE YOU CAN FIND BEAUTIFUL AFFORDABLE SHUTTERS FOR YOUR HOME.

Q *I have a small bathroom and want to let as much light in as possible. What type of shutters will do this?* ANNABEL WILSON

A If you are fitting shutters in your bathrooms and require privacy without losing light, tier on tier shutters offer the perfect solution. With separately adjustable top and bottom panels you can open either section or adjust the slats to create the perfect configuration for your room.

If your windows don't suit this idea, cafe-style shutters make a great alternative as they cover the lower section of your window, providing a balance between daylight and screening. Our step by step measuring and installation guides make our range of DIY shutters easy to order and fit and if you have any queries our in-house team of experts are on hand to guide you through the process. Choose from wood or vinyl finishes and use the colour match service to create a bespoke solution for your bathroom windows at a truly affordable price.







ADAM BLACK IS THE CO-FOUNDER OF BUTTON & SPRUNG, **BUTTONANDSPRUNG.COM**, THE HOME OF STYLISH, HANDMADE BEDS.

Q *I'm on the lookout for a new bed and want it to be upholstered in a trendy fabric for a modern look. What would you suggest?* ABBY BUTCHER

A One of the trends that I really love at the moment is denim, which looks amazing on an upholstered bedstead or divan. Whether you're looking for a deep navy shade or a washed out hue, Button & Sprung has a great palette to choose from to help you bring your bedroom up to date.

Denim is a versatile fabric that can be completely transformed with a few key accessories, meaning you can personalise your use of it to your own tastes. Mirror the high street and add small touches of metallics such as copper to help create a glamorous feel in your boudoir. Make sure you choose co-ordinating bed linen in neutral shades so that they won't clash with the frame, and will add a hint of understated style to your room.



AS SALES DIRECTOR OF I&JL BROWN, **BROWNANTIQUES.COM**, SIMON HILTON IS THE AUTHORITY ON ADDING UNIQUE, BESPOKE TOUCHES TO YOUR HOME.

Q *I want to give my country kitchen a bright and summery makeover without losing any rustic charm. What would you suggest?* SOPHIE LEACH

A They say the kitchen is the heart of the home and there are a few very easy ways to add a summery touch without changing the style and feel of the room. Add a hint of sunshine to your kitchen by filling some small coloured vases with flowers and dot them around the table. Coloured glass is always a lovely way to add some vibrancy to a kitchen – tumblers and wine glasses in turquoise, ruby red and purple will add a stylish touch to your kitchen and inject some colour after a long winter.

If you wanted to go all out, why not paint your kitchen chairs in pale yellow or sky blue? Or invest in some gorgeous new squab cushions in cheerful colours? Fill a large white bowl with bright, zesty oranges for an additional pop of colour and hang a large reclaimed pendant light on for a modern twist whilst still retaining that all important rustic charm.







AS MARKETING DIRECTOR OF CORMAR CARPETS, **CORMARCARPETS.CO.UK**, DAVID CORMACK KNOWS ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT CARING FOR YOUR FLOOR COVERINGS.

Q *We recently had a new carpet laid in my living room and I'm desperate to keep it looking as lovely as it does now! Any tips?* KERRY HOLDSWORTH

A Carpets aren't really difficult to care for, but it does pay to know a few useful tips. The right care and upkeep not only keeps carpets looking their best but it extends their lifespan too and you need to start from the moment your new floor covering is laid.

Once a new carpet is in place, make sure the quality is upheld by undertaking a good maintenance programme – regular vacuuming two or three times a week. The key to good carpet maintenance is to avoid particles of loose dirt and dust from working their way into the carpet pile where they will act abrasively on the fibres and discolour the surface. Protect new carpet by installing brush or barrier matting in your entrance way to clear dirt, dust and grime from shoes before entering the home, or even better, wear slippers in the house!

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CROSS-STITCH ARTWORK

Master a new craft while sewing a lovely wall hanging



Sometimes the best way to learn a new skill is to buy a craft kit. That way you don't have the worry coming up with a design or trying to pick colours, which leaves you to concentrate on getting to grips with the task in hand by practising and perfecting your technique. That's why we love these little kits from Nia Cross Stitch (**nia-crossstitch.com**), each pack includes a full-colour graph chart, cross-stitch fabric, a thread card loaded with all the colours you need and special needle. All you have to do is simply place your fabric in an embroidery hoop and follow the chart. Then just iron the reverse and pop into a frame. Start with a simple summer sampler like this one to practise with and graduate to a larger, tapestry creation as your confidence grows. These simple artworks make great gifts and would look adorable in a little girlie room.

Shopping Guide

Banbury Sewing Centre



Welcome to the
Banbury Sewing Centre

Established for over 25 years - we do hope you enjoy your visit with us today and everyday.

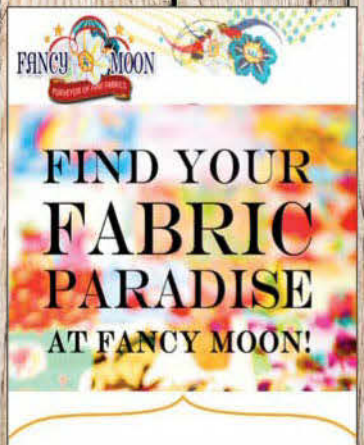
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Homemaker NOTES

The essential guide full of tips and tricks you may find useful this month



I'd be lost without...

FABRIC

What I love about fabrics is that you can transform the whole look of your home by recovering a sofa, whipping up some scatter cushions or hanging a huge patchwork wall piece. But you can also use little pieces to make a real difference. I've recently spruced up my spare room by adding a collection of handmade fabric Tilda dolls like the one pictured here and displaying my left over Tilda Spring Lake fabric scraps in an eclectic mix of vintage frames. Get the doll patterns and Spring Lake collection at **billowfabrics.co.uk**.

ELLA JOHNSTON, EDITOR



CUTE AS A BUTTON

UPDATE OLD FASTENERS WITH FABRIC



1 Cut a circle of fabric approximately twice the size of the button

2 Make a running stitch around the circumference of the fabric circle





3 Place a button in the middle of the fabric. Pull thread to gather, and cover button

4 Stitch from side to side on the reverse of the button to close it and secure



GRATE IDEAS

USE THE SUMMER MONTHS TO SHOW YOUR DORMANT FIREPLACES SOME TLC

- For a professional look on a cast iron design, apply a small amount of metal polish to wire wool and rub into the metal using a firm hand. Repeat until you have covered all areas making sure you get rid of any rust. Buff with a soft cloth. Don't use water as this will rust the metal.
- Give a wooden mantelpiece a new leash of life by waxing. It protects the materials underneath the wax while adding a sheen.
- Clean tiles around the fireplace by brushing away all loose dirt and debris from the tile surface, taking extra care around cracks or crumbling areas. A vacuum with a brush attachment is good for this. For more engrained dirt use a toothbrush or baby hairbrush. Once clean, polish the tiles with a clean, soft cloth.



Oven temperatures

CELSIUS	FAHRENHEIT	GAS MK
110°C	225°F	¼
130°C	250°F	½
140°C	275°F	1
150°C	300°F	2
170°C	325°F	3
180°C	350°F	4
190°C	375°F	5
200°C	400°F	6
220°C	425°F	7
230°C	450°F	8

(Reduce these temperatures by 10-20°C for fan-assisted ovens)

Weights & measures

If you're confused about how much of this to add, or how much of that you need, refer to our indispensable conversion chart.

1 teaspoon (tsp)	= 5ml
1 dessertspoon	= 12ml
1 tablespoon (tbs)	= 15ml
1 shot	= 25ml
1 fluid ounce (fl oz)	= 30ml
1 pint	= 568ml
1 ounce (oz)	= 28g
1 pound (lb)	= 450g
1 cup (sugar)	= 200g
1 cup (flour)	= 115g
1 cup (liquid)	= 240ml

"A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it."

GEORGE MOORE, THE BROOK KERITH

TABLE MANNERS

IMPRESS YOUR PARTY GUESTS BY TAKING CARE OF YOUR DINNER WARE

- Clean silver plated cutlery by placing it in a silver-foil-lined tray (shiny side up) and covering with warm water. Add baking powder and once the powder has stopped fizzing, remove the silverware and dry with a clean tea-towel.
- Remove unsightly tea and coffee stains on china cups with a damp sponge sprinkled with cream of tartar.
- Plagued by grey marks on china left by cutting and scraping silverware? Don't worry, you can gently rub these away with a soft cloth dabbed with a little toothpaste. Try soaking plates with rinds from oranges and lemons to get them gleaming.
- Look after your china by storing it carefully; extremes in temperature can cause cracks and breakage so don't box china away in a cold basement or hot attic.

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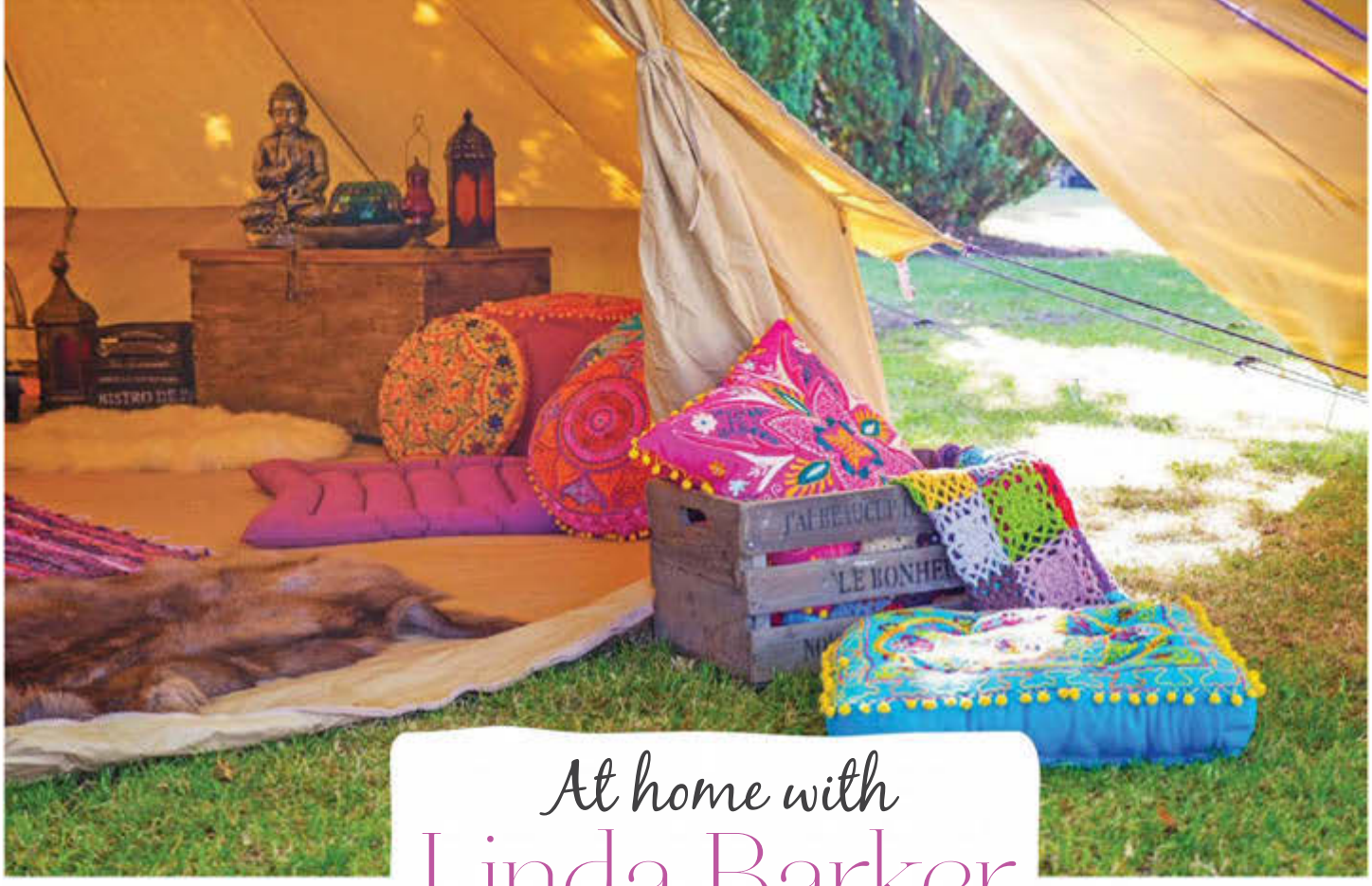


IMAGE © BOUTIQUECAMPING.COM

At home with Linda Barker

Create a holiday haven without leaving town

At this time of year the thoughts of most people turn to holidays, but not everyone is lucky enough to jet off to an exotic destination. For those who don't have the chance of a getaway, there is another option – transform your garden into your very own resort! Staycations are becoming more and more popular these days and there are so many wonderful ways to create that holiday feeling at home. Whether you want to recreate the feel of an English seaside town, a white-washed Greek village, or a Moroccan courtyard, I have some easy décor ideas to make your backyard a real summer retreat.



BEACH DAY

I love the idea of having a sandpit in the garden – complete with buckets and spades of course! It's easy to create one with timber borders, rather like the structure of a raised flower bed. To create a fully immersive holiday experience why not ask a tradesperson to build a giant version that adults as well as children can enjoy? Imagine sipping a cocktail while reclining on a deck chair, your feet in the sand. For people lucky enough to have big trees in their garden, a giant swing chair is a wonderful addition to your holiday escape. I've seen some amazing ones on Pinterest, especially those made from old hammocks or the tops of mini trampolines – these make stunning seats strung between sturdy branches.

ENGLISH SUMMER

It can be fun to turn an old shed or summer house into a serene place to relax if the weather gets wet. Think about creating a little bit of Greece in your garden by painting the exterior white, with the trims and doors in that classic colbolt blue synonymous of the country. Finish the look with blue-glazed pots planted with bright blooms placed out the front; you could even add pretty olive oil containers planted with rosemary. Speaking of our English weather, it's also worth thinking about how to extend your outdoor time into the chilly evening. I absolutely love a fire pit for providing warmth, and there are some wonderful ones on the market now. I got mine from a company called **thepotco.com**. Don't forget you can cook in the embers too – just buy some pizza stones and heat up your late-night nibbles!

CAMP OUT

With a few blankets and throws you can stay outside well into the small hours, and for an authentically-exotic holiday feel I would go for a Moroccan look with your choice of textiles. This theme is very on-trend at the moment and can be seen all over the high-street. Use piles of lovely patchwork throws and cushions to create your North African scheme; warm colours and an eclectic mix of patterns and textures is the key. If you don't want your 'holiday at home' to end when the sun goes down, there's no reason why you can't go the whole hog and camp in your garden overnight. Kids will love the novelty of climbing into sleeping bags and experiencing story time by torch light. Carry on the fun with an alfresco breakfast the next morning of fresh fruit and yogurt – drizzle on honey and chopped dates for a Moroccan twist!

Happy staycation everyone!

See Linda Barker's lovely shop, **reallylindabarker.co.uk** for more decorating ideas and accessories, and if you're looking for a professional tradesperson, be sure to check out her partner company **checkatrade.com**, which has a database of reputable contacts.

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